FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

Daily Report

Latin America

ATTENTION!! ATTENTION!! ATTENTION!!

FBIS will phase out publication of most of its paper reports, including ALL Daily Reports and most FBIS Reports, by 31 December 1996.

See inside for information on how to access FBIS products and services electronically.

FBIS-LAT-96-043
Monday
4 March 1996

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

March 1996

Dear Customer:

Responding to our many customers' requests, NTIS will be offering FBIS publications electronically. Due to resource limitations, hardcopy production of FBIS publications will be phased out during 1996. We will notify our customers well in advance of the expiration date for each of our publications. Please see below regarding electronic access to products.

Our goal is to cease publication of all reports by 31 December 1996, except for S&T PERSPECTIVES, S&T CENTRAL EURASIA, S&T CHINA, S&T KOREA, S&T EUROPE, and S&T JAPAN. The S&T reports will continue to be published as hardcopy until the graphics they contain can be disseminated on-line.

FBIS products are offered electronically through the National Technical Information Service's (NTIS) "World News Connection" (WNC). This is a new on-line subscription service accessible through the World Wide Web. The Web address is http://wnc.fedworld.gov. Please see next page for a subscription form or call NTIS Fax Direct at 703-487-4140 and enter product code 8645 to receive more information.

World News Connection™

A Foreign News Alert Service from the U.S. Government

World News Connection - WNC1.....**$ 21**
7 Day - Introductory Offer
Unlimited interactive searching
[no profiles]
Order number SUB-9856BDQ

World News Connection - WNC2.....**$ 50**
Monthly
Unlimited interactive searching
[no profiles]
Order number PB95-985700BDQ

World News Connection - WNC3.....**$ 75**
Monthly
Unlimited interactive searching
[1 profile]
Order number PB95-985800BDQ

World News Connection - WNC4.....**$100**
Monthly
Unlimited interactive searching
[up to 5 profiles]
Order number PB95-985900BDQ
(Prices are subject to change)

User Name *(Please Print or Type)*	Internet E-mail Address *(Required)*	Order Number	Price
1) _____	_____	_____	_____
2) _____	_____	_____	_____

(Continue on a blank sheet if more space is required)

Deposit Account Number (for NTIS account customers only): _____

Customer Master Number (if known): _____ Date: _____

Contact Name: _____ Organization: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Province/Territory: _____ Country: _____

Foreign Postal Code: _____

Internet E-mail Address (Organization contact person): _____

Telephone Number: ( ) _____ Fax Number: ( ) _____

Credit Card Number: _____

Credit Card Expiration Date: _____

Card Type (Visa, Master Card, or American Express): _____

Cardholder's Name (as printed on the credit card): _____

Cardholder's Signature (required to validate all orders): _____

(Please fax this form back to NTIS at **703-321-8547**. Fax service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
To verify receipt of your fax, call (703) 487-4679 between 7:00am - 5:00pm, Monday - Friday, Eastern Time.)

Daily Report
Latin America

FBIS-LAT-96-043 *4 March 1996*

CONTENTS

CARIBBEAN

Cuba

Cuba: Minrex Says Cuba Not To Allow New Violations *[Havana Radio]* 1
Cuba: Approval Sought For Proposal To Convene UNGA *[Havana Radio]* 1
Cuba: Mexico Rejects U.S Helms-Burton Bill *[PRENSA LATINA]* 2
Cuba: GRANMA on Security Council's Manipulation By U.S. *[PRENSA LATINA]* 2
Cuba: Alarcon on Contacts With U.S. on Planned Flotilla *[PRENSA LATINA]* 2
Cuba: Robaina Warns World Against Helms-Burton Bill *[PRENSA LATINA]* 3
Cuba: Robaina Meets UN Representatives, Seeks Support *[PRENSA LATINA]* 3
Cuba: Alarcon on Anti-Castro Group's Plans, U.S. Measures *[PRENSA LATINA]* 4
Cuba: Combatants, Workers Support Government Position *[Havana TV]* 5
Cuba: Robaina on Airspace Threats, Previous Incidents *[Havana TV]* 5
Cuba: Alarcon Cautions Against Violation of Territory *[Havana TV]* 6
Cuba: Helms-Burton Bill Called 'Political Foolishness' *[NOTIMEX]* 6
Cuba: Alarcon Hopes U.S. Government To Prevent Incident *[Havana Radio]* 7
Cuba: Havana in 'Absolute Calm,' 'Warship' Deployed *[Madrid EFE]* 7
Cuba: Border Guards Continue To Patrol Territorial Waters *[Madrid EFE]* 7
Cuba: Robaina Speaks Out Against Escalation of Tensions *[PRENSA LATINA]* 8
Cuba: Foreign Minister on Motives For 24 Feb Provocations *[PRENSA LATINA]* 8
Cuba: Anti-Castro Group Pays Homage to Missing Pilots *[Madrid EFE]* 9
Cuba: End of 'Counterrevolutionary' Provocations *[Havana Radio]* 9
Cuba: Station Commentary on Fate of Flotilla *[Havana Radio]* 9
Cuba: 'Wisdom Prevailed,' Flotilla Returned *[Havana TV]* 9
Cuba: Operation To Guard Coasts Ends Without Incidents *[PRENSA LATINA]* 10
Cuba: Havana Residents Remain Calm Despite Threats *[PRENSA LATINA]* 11
Cuba: Robaina Meets With Cuban Community in U.S. *[PRENSA LATINA]* 11
Cuba: Report Notes International 'Gestures of Solidarity' *[Havana Radio]* 12
Cuba: Former Rescue Pilot Denies Media Charges *[PRENSA LATINA]* 12
Cuba: Commentary Says U.S. Policy 'Not at All Serious' *[Havana TV]* 13
Cuba: TV Shows 'New Evidence' of Airspace Violation *[PRENSA LATINA]* 14
Cuba: TV Details 24 Feb Downing Incident *[Havana TV]* 14

MEXICO

Mexico: Certification Process Said To Create 'Tensions' *[LA JORNADA 1 Mar]* 16

CENTRAL AMERICA

Guatemala

Guatemala: Abductors Release U.S. Citizen Without Ransom *[ACAN]* 17

Panama

Panama: Government Pleased With U.S. Certification *[Panama City TV]* 17
Panama: 'Pleased' With U.S. Decision on Certification *[LA PRENSA 3 Mar]* 17
Panama: Panama Not To Back Out of Fight on Drugs *[LA PRENSA 1 Mar]* 18

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina

Argentina: 'Disagreements' With Christopher on Trade *[CLARIN 1 Mar]* 19

Argentina: Official Stresses Christopher Remarks *[TELAM]* 19
Argentina: Christopher's Cavallo Remarks 'Controversial' *[NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS]* 19
Argentina: Christopher's 'Pat on the Back' Welcomed *[LA NACION 2 Mar]* 19
Argentina: Bishops Criticize Christopher's Cavallo Remarks *[LA NACION 2 Mar]* 20
Argentina: Cuban Events Overshadow Christopher Visit *[LA NACION 3 Mar]* 20
Argentina: Disagreement on Christopher Praise of Cavallo *[TELAM]* 22
Argentina: Communique on Joint Oil Commission With UK *[TELAM]* 22

Bolivia

Bolivia: Development Minister on U.S. Certification *[La Paz Radio]* 23

Brazil

Brazil: Lampreia, Christopher Sign Nuclear, Space Accords *[Brasilia Radio]* 23
Brazil: Joint Space Exploration Pact With U.S. Detailed *[Rio de Janeiro TV]* 24
Brazil: Christopher, Lampreia on Ecuador-Peru Talks *[Madrid EFE]* 24
Brazil: Cardoso, Christopher Discuss Patent Bill *[Sao Paulo TV]* 24
Brazil: Lampeira, Christopher on NPT, Cuban Downing *[AGENCIA ESTADO]* 25
Brazil: Pro-Cuban Students Boo Christopher *[AGENCIA ESTADO]* 26
Brazil: Christopher Visit Sign of 'Partnership' With U.S. *[FOLHA DE SAO PAULO 1 Mar]* 26
Brazil: Christopher's Visit Said Clinton Campaign Move *[GAZETA MERCANTIL 1-3 Mar]* 27
Brazil: Former Ambassadors View Cuban Plane Incident *[JORNAL DO BRASIL 28 Feb]* 27
Brazil: Suplicy Bill Backs Elections for Alternates *[GAZETA MERCANTIL 19-21 Feb]* 29
Brazil: PMDB's Loss of Political Power Viewed *[GAZETA MERCANTIL 19-21 Feb]* 30
Brazil: FHC Establishes Special Advisory Group *[JORNAL DO BRASIL 26 Feb]* 33

Chile

Chile: Fernandez 'Repudiation' of Cuba's Downing of Plane *[EL MERCURIO 1 Mar]* 34
Chile: Insulza Discusses Plane Incident With Cuban Envoy *[Santiago TV]* 35

Colombia

Colombia: Correspondent Notes Decertification by U.S. *[Santa Fe de Bogota Radio]* 35
Colombia: Congressmen React to U.S. Decertification *[Santa Fe de Bogota Radio]* 35
Colombia: Police Vow To Continue Eradication of Drugs *[Santa Fe de Bogota Radio]* 36
Colombia: Justice Minister Says UK Aid To Continue *[Santa Fe de Bogota Radio]* 37
Colombia: Foreign Minister Decries U.S. Decertification *[Santa Fe de Bogota Radio]* 37
Colombia: Finance Minister on Effects of Decertification *[Santa Fe de Bogota Radio]* 37
Colombia: Gaviria, Envoy to U.S. on Decertification *[Santa Fe de Bogota Radio]* 38
Colombia: Police, Military Leaders on Decertification *[EL TIEMPO 2 Mar]* 39
Colombia: Defense, Police Heads Reject Decertification *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 39
Colombia: Politicians React to U.S. Decertification *[EL TIEMPO 2 Mar]* 39
Colombia: Business Leaders React to Decertification *[Satna Fe de Bogota TV]* 41
Colombia: Samper Address on U.S. Decertification *[Santa Fe de Bogota Radio]* 41
Colombia: Prosecutor's Communique on Decertification *[Santa Fe de Bogota Radio]* 44
Colombia: VP Issues Communique on Decertification *[AFP]* 44
Colombia: Barranquilla Residents Protest Decertification *[NOTIMEX]* 45
Colombia: Press Blames U.S. Decertification on Samper *[NOTIMEX]* 45
Colombia: Accusations Committee Receives New Evidence *[Santa Fe de Bogota Radio]* 45
Colombia: Proseutor, Attorney General on Investigations *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 46

Ecuador

Ecuador: Measures of Confidence Exchanged With Peru *[Madrid EFE]* 46

Ecuador: Peru's Hermoza Says Talks With Ortega 'Positive' *[Quito Radio]* 46
Ecuador: Defense Minister Urges MOMEP To Verify Accords *[Quito Radio]* 47

Peru

Peru: Official To Obtain Ecuadoran List of 'Impasses' *[EL COMERCIO 28 Feb]* 47
Peru: Ecuador's Leoro Said Disclosing Impasse 'Secrets' *[EL COMERCIO 28 Feb]* 47
Peru: Jurists, Opposition Criticize Receipt of 'Impasses' *[LA REPUBLICA 29 Feb]* 48
Peru: Daily Assesses Ecuador-Peru Border Military Meeting *[LA REPUBLICA 14 Feb]* 49
Peru: Analyst Views Fujimori's International Image *[LA REPUBLICA 28 Feb]* 50
Peru: Editorial Views Current Economic Policy, Situation *[EXPRESO 14 Feb]* 51

Venezuela

Venezuela: Executive Delays Delegation's Trip to U.S. *[Caracas TV]* 51
Venezuela: Report on Reactions to Suspension of IMF Talks *[Madrid EFE]* 52
Venezuela: Finance Minister Favors Signing IMF Pact *[Caracas TV]* 53

Cuba

Cuba: Minrex Says Cuba Not To Allow New Violations

PA0103002696 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 29 Feb 96

[Report by Jose Mayo from the International Press Center in Havana; from the "National Radio News" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Mayo] The Cuban Foreign Ministry reiterated today that our country will not allow violations of any sort of its national sovereignty. Carlos Fernandez de Cossio, director of the North American Office of the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Relations [Minrex], stressed that Cuba will take the necessary measures to prevent anti-Castro groups supported by the Miami-based right-wing radicals from conducting new incursions with pirate aircraft in the Cuban airspace. Fernandez de Cossio made this statement at a meeting held by Minrex spokeswoman Marianela Ferriol with domestic and international reporters at the International Press Center in Havana.

Fernandez de Cossio added that the United States should enforce its Neutrality Law, in effect since 1794, [as heard] to preclude new provocations by Cuba's enemies and new violations of Cuba's airspace and territorial waters. Fernandez de Cossio emphasized that despite the incident on 24 February, Cuba is not planning to change its position regarding its migration agreements with the United States. Regarding the possible approval of the Helms-Burton bill by U.S. President William Clinton, Fernandez de Cossio noted that this bill will affect political issues between Cuba and the United States and will hinder any agreements between Washington and Havana. In addition, he pointed out that Cuba hopes that its commercial partners will continue to trade with Cuba, despite the approval of the Helms-Burton bill.

The Helms-Burton bill has been repudiated worldwide, because it violates international laws and represents a blatant interference by the United States in the internal affairs of other nations.

Meanwhile, Minrex spokeswoman Marianela Ferriol indicated that Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina sent a letter to the International Civil Aviation Organization to ask for the investigation of violations of Cuban airspace by pirate aircraft coming from the United States. In addition, Ferriol remarked that the coordination office of the Nonaligned Movement confirmed its support for Cuba's petition to resume the sessions of the 50th UN General Assembly to discuss Havana's side on the violations of Cuban airspace by pirate planes coming from the United States. Ferriol emphasized the support of the Cuban people and government for the hunger strike staged by several members of the Pastors for Peace movement to demand that the White House return 400 computers. These computers were recently confiscated by U.S. customs authorities on the U.S. borders with Canada and Mexico, and Pastors for Peace had planned to donate them to the Cuban medical sector.

Cuba: Approval Sought For Proposal To Convene UNGA

PA0103170396 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1255 GMT 1 Mar 96

[Telephone interview with correspondent Pedro Prada, at the United Nations, by unidentified correspondent, in New York; from the "Doing Radio" newscast — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] We are in a position to report that Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina continued his efforts at the United Nations today to obtain the approval of a Cuban proposal to convene the UN General Assembly again, so he can present Cuba's version of last Saturday's incident. Now we will get in touch at the United Nations with Robaina's adviser, Pedro Prada, who will report on today's activities and other details of what happened at this world organization yesterday. Good morning, Prada.

[Prada] Good morning, Marina. Good morning to all listeners of "Doing Radio."

[Correspondent] I wish to ask you about the foreign minister's slated activities for today.

[Prada] The most important activity of the Cuban delegates and in Robaina's personal program is to continue to hold consultations with the delegates of all UN member countries, in particular those who at present are leaders and presidents of regional groups, which are now Security Council members. Based both on what happened during a meeting with the Non-Aligned Movement's Coordinating Bureau and the Latin American and Caribbean groups' unanimous support for Cuba's proposal to resume the General Assembly's 50th period of sessions, the time is ripe for Cuba's request to be supported by the majority. As many of the countries that participated in these meetings said, this is a case of violation of national sovereignty and the independence and national security defense of a UN member country.

[Correspondent] Would a consensus or vote be necessary for the General Assembly to resume sessions as the Cuban delegates have requested?

[Prada] A certain consensus on this request is required. This is precisely what is being debated. But, considering

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

all that the Cuban delegates have in their hands at this time and all we have been able to confirm, we can expect the General Assembly sessions to be resumed next week.

Cuba: Mexico Rejects U.S Helms-Burton Bill

PA0103184296 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1450 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mexico City, 1 Mar (PL) — The Mexican Government believes the Helms-Burton bill, designed to tighten the blockade on Cuba, contains inappropriate elements, and it told this to the White House and the U.S. Congress, a Mexican diplomat revealed here today.

Miguel Angel Gonzalez, legal consultant for the Secretariat of Foreign Relations, indicated that his government made a very thorough analysis on the matter and reached the conclusion that if this legislation is approved, it will become a source of commercial tensions worldwide and not only for the American Continent.

According to Mexican jurists, the proposal contains elements that violate international law concerning the relations of friendship and cooperation among nations, as well as the U.S. Constitution and NAFTA.

In a statement to local reporters, Gonzalez recalled that last year, Mexico told the Department of State about his concern on the extraterritorial nature of the Helms-Burton bill, and its disregard of the majority opinion of the international community, which condemns the blockade of the island.

He clarified that the Mexican Government maintains the same rejection toward subsequent versions of the bill.

At the same time, Adrian Lajous, director of Mexican Petroleum (Pemex), announced that Mexico will continue its trade of hydrocarbons with the island, based on the country's right to maintain economic exchanges with any state.

Cuba: GRANMA on Security Council's Manipulation By U.S.

PA0103194196 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1456 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 1 Mar (PL) — The UN Security Council's meeting to consider the downing of two U.S. planes that violated Cuban airspace last weekend was described as suspicious.

GRANMA, official organ of the Communist Party of Cuba, in an article titled "Improvisation and Adventure Are Not Good Advisers," said: "There obviously is something fishy in the Council's priorities."

The newspaper compares the Security Council's urgent call for a meeting on Monday with the Council's silence on the Cuban Government report of the sabotage of a Cuban airliner in Barbados in 1976, whose perpetrator now lives in the United States.

GRANMA added: In its haste, the Council apparently has not realized that the legislative instrument invoked to condemn the downing of the Brothers to the Rescue planes lacks legal force.

Article 3 bis of the Geneva Convention, which forbids downing civilian planes "regardless of the circumstances," is not in force, because it has received only 78 of the 102 necessary votes of the 104 International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) member countries, GRANMA continued to say. It finally said: Neither the United States, Cuba, nor eight of the Council's member countries have ratified the above paragraph.

Cuba: Alarcon on Contacts With U.S. on Planned Flotilla

PA0203030496 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0020 GMT 2 Mar 96

[By Susana Ugarte]

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 1 Mar (PL) — Cuba and the United States have exchanged information about the preventive measures they have adopted in view of the announcement that a flotilla will leave Florida on 2 March for maritime zones near the island's territorial waters.

This revelation was made by Cuban Parliament President Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada to special media envoys who arrived in this capital in the past hours, as well as to local and foreign correspondents.

According to Alarcon, Ambassador Fernando Remirez de Estenoz, head of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, met on the evening of 29 February with Anne Patterson, deputy assistant secretary of state, thus giving continuity to various bilateral contacts related to the 24 February incidents.

On 1 February in Havana, the Cuban party met with Joseph Sullivan, head of the U.S. Interests Section. On both occasions, the parties detailed the steps taken by their respective countries, Alarcon added.

It will be a special day that could become historic, he pointed out, because this could be the first time that U.S. authorities have enforced international law and prevented the violation of Cuban sovereignty through a specific order from President William Clinton.

If anyone crosses the limit allowed by the United States (21 miles north of the Cuban shoreline), they will have

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

to prevent it or become responsible or accomplices to what could transpire, Alarcon added. He said that he hopes and trusts that this will not happen.

When asked about the evidence in Cuban hands with regard to the incident six days ago when two small pirate planes of the Brothers to the Rescue group headquartered in Miami were downed, Alarcon noted that his government welcomed a request to have the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) carry out an investigation.

He added that Havana already told ICAO that it is awaiting its delegation in order to facilitate giving it the evidence that it has and hopes that the United States will follow suit.

To contribute more details, the national parliament president showed the reporters several documents from the U.S. Interests Section encompassing a lengthy period in which that diplomatic representation has alerted or received from Cuban authorities information about the activities of Brothers to the Rescue.

In reply to a question on Brothers to the Rescue pilot Juan Pablo Roque, who is in Cuba, Alarcon said that this aviator is not an infiltrated agent of the Cuban Government, as has been speculated, and he added that his country not only has his testimony, but more evidence of planned attacks and other terrorist actions by this group.

This is a man, Alarcon pointed out, who decided to leave the national territory of Cuba for the United States, where he joined Brothers to the Rescue, which is financed by wealthy ultra-rightist sectors of Cuban origin, as leaders of this inclination have admitted.

I am unaware of the evolution of his thoughts or of his life; I have not read his book or met him personally, but I do know that for some reason he became disappointed and started to think differently, Alarcon noted.

Roque decided to return to his country and took some basic steps. He arrived in a normal manner and is here in Havana, Ricardo Alarcon added.

Cuba: Robaina Warns World Against Helms-Burton Bill

PA0203035296 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0030 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 1 Mar (PL) — Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina said today that, although Cuba may be the pretext and although it may be aimed against the island, it is important for the international community to know the Helms-Burton bill is aimed against mankind.

While he answered questions from a large group of journalists at the entrance to the UN building, he added it would be important to know the measure to which the international community must accept that the U.S. Congress can tell the world who invests and who does not, who travels and who does not.

No matter how powerful the United States may be and no matter how powerful its Congress may be, they will find it difficult to control the whole world and supervise who comes and goes in Cuba, Robaina said.

It is possible that the Capitol's foreign affairs committees in Washington will have to increase their payrolls, he jokingly added.

Referring to Cuba, he recalled the popular saying that when a screw is tightened too much it can lose its thread; he said the law could make life more difficult, more complex in his country, but it will not implement measures that are harsher than previous ones.

He recalled these laws have had various names for Cuba. Some time ago they were called the Platt law (reference to the Platt Amendment, which was introduced by the United States into the Cuban Constitution at the turn of the century); the Torricelli law came more recently; it could possibly be called the Helms-Burton law in a few months; and it may have other names in the future.

"I could say the world will perhaps understand us better today because the United States is trying to enforce against the world what they have enforced against Cuba for more than 30 years," the Cuban foreign minister said.

He immediately added that no one has Cuba's experience when it comes to resisting this law although, to be honest, his country would rather not accumulate more experience; it would rather work in a rational manner as is being done by civilized and neighboring countries that should work in a civilized manner.

However, that is precisely what the Republican extreme right mostly lacks, meaning civilization, the foreign minister remarked.

Cuba: Robaina Meets UN Representatives, Seeks Support

PA0203035696 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0040 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 1 Mar (PL) — Cuban Foreign Relations Minister Roberto Robaina announced on 1 March that his country's request to resume the current General Assembly session could be met next week.

In statements to the media, he said that as part of the efforts to reveal documents and Cuba's position

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

regarding violations to its airspace and territorial waters he held separate meetings here on 1 March with the presidents of regional UN groups.

Robaina met with Poseci W. Bone and Slaheddine Abdellah, permanent representatives of Fiji and Tunisia, who are the heads of the groups of Asian and African states, respectively.

The Cuban Government is seeking the support of member states for its appearance before the current 50th session to explain its arguments on such illegal acts in the past 20 months, including the 24 February incident when two pirate planes were downed because of this.

The foreign minister also met with U.S. Democratic Party Congressman Charles Rangel and welcomed at the Cuban mission Peter Osvald, the permanent representative of Sweden who heads the group of Western European countries and other states (including Australia, New Zealand, and Canada).

Although Robaina gave no details on the results of his efforts, UN sources said that the session could start on 6 March as part of a discussion called "A Decade of International Law."

When asked whether he would meet with the Security Council because its president was changed on 1 March (the United States held the presidency in February and manipulated a meeting to accuse Cuba at full speed before the Cuban foreign minister arrived in New York), he said that that was precisely the intention of his trip.

Given that it was impossible for the Security Council to wait for his arrival, our wishes changed and we now hope to address the Assembly, and until this step is taken first, we do not plan to go to the Council unless there are reasons making our presence there unavoidable, he noted.

Robaina pointed out that Cuba feels more secure at the Assembly and it continues to feel insecure at the Council although its president was changed, and he added that he met with the permanent representative of Botswana, who will be heading the Council in March, as part of his bilateral contacts with some of its members.

Cuba: Alarcon on Anti-Castro Group's Plans, U.S. Measures

PA0203031896 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0050 GMT 2 Mar 96

[Report by Javier Rodriguez]

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 1 Mar (PL) — Ricardo Alarcon, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government, said in a news conference today: Cuba is always prepared to enforce respect for its sovereignty, and we consider ourselves forewarned and will be alert tomorrow.

Alarcon thus referred to the measures adopted by his country due to various Miami-based elements' announced intention to approach the island's airspace and maritime limits aboard several boats and aircraft.

The parliamentary leader said that in recent diplomatic contact between Cuban and U.S. Government representatives, the latter had reasserted that they would adopt measures to prevent any violation of the Antillean nation's jurisdictional areas.

U.S. authorities will enforce respect for international laws for the first time if this occurs, otherwise the U.S. Coast Guard will be privileged witnesses to the fact that not even President William Clinton's latest proposals were respected, he added.

He added that, in this case, the United States would be bound to prevent any violation or it would become responsible for, and be an accomplice of, the same.

Alarcon harshly criticized the organization "Brothers to the Rescue," which organized the raid last Saturday, when two of its aircraft were shot down, for tomorrow's much-publicized activity. He accused the organization of engaging in terrorism inside and outside Cuban territory.

He mentioned as an example that the license issued to one of the group's pilots was suspended by the United States in 1994 for sabotaging a merchant marine boat in the Florida area — "something that has absolutely nothing to do with international civil aviation" — but the sanction was only enforced four months.

We have official U.S. documents that, in some cases, notify us; in other cases, request our help; and, in others, announce dangerous activities by Brothers to the Rescue, he explained.

In reply to a question, Alarcon said that the U.S. media's latest campaign on the alleged prohibition for a meeting by the so-called "Cuban Council" is part of Washington's desperate attempt to create an artificial alternative to the local political process.

The so-called council is only a U.S. fabrication. Its facilities are located at the U.S. Interests Office, and U.S. officials offer it all kinds of aid, he said.

Alarcon specifically reported that Robin Meyers, an official of that diplomatic mission, personally transferred opposition members to a meeting with a visiting U.S. delegation at the National Hotel in this capital, using the mentioned office's automobiles.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

He denied that any council conference had been banned because there is no law in Cuba that obstructs the right to hold public meetings, and this right is continuously exercised throughout the territory.

There are no dead, no one is beaten, there are no prisoners, and, in fact, only two of those people were arraigned and tried for disobedience and resisting the authorities — something that can cost anyone several broken ribs in the United States — especially if you are a black person, he emphasized.

Finally, he said that, as far as the Cuban party is concerned, and judging from what is known about the White House's intentions, the migration agreements they signed will be respected and are still in effect, despite the efforts of those who, like Brothers to the Rescue, want to sponsor an illegal immigration.

Cuba: Combatants, Workers Support Government Position

PA0203042196 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cubavision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 2 Mar 96

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Combatants and civilian workers from the Great Tank Unit [Gran Unidad de Tanques] of the [words indistinct] of the western territory ratified their support for the Cuban Government's position.

During a ceremony to reaffirm their revolutionary principles and to condemn the violations of Cuban airspace, they expressed their willingness to comply with the fatherland's defense under any circumstances.

[Begin unidentified combatant recording] These youth are determined to win or die. That is why we support the statements of the foreign minister, because we are the ones who have to take care of our sovereignty, our freedom. Long live free Cuba! [audience shouts: Viva!] [end recording]

The first tanks that fought and defeated the mercenary forces at the Bay of Pigs came from this Great Tank Unit more than 35 years ago. Its long heroic tradition is also characterized by the internationalist missions it carried out in Angola.

Today they are working in food production for the people with the creation of three contingents that will participate in tomato and potato harvests in Pinar del Rio and Havana Provinces.

The young combatants also said the Grand Tank Unit [words indistinct] the Mambisa [Cuban natives who fought against the Spaniards] cavalry of Ignacio Agramonte.

Cuba: Robaina on Airspace Threats, Previous Incidents

PA0203042396 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cubavision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 2 Mar 96

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] In statements to the press at the United Nations, Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina referred to the threats made by Miami—based extremist organizations to again enter Cuban territorial waters and airspace. In this regard, he reiterated once more that, should these actions be carried out, they will be facing the same risks as if they did it in the jurisdiction of any country.

[Begin Robaina recording] I don't want to predict the events beforehand because, in the first place, we are not accustomed to using threatening language. I believe that those who say they will provoke us.... [pauses] We have never taken action against those who say they will provoke us. We have been very patient with these provocations and we have taken action when alternatives have been exhausted in the face of these provocations.

What I want to ratify is that the country's position [words indistinct] of the sovereignty, independence, and airspace has not changed, wherever the provocations may come from. Cuban airspace is simply Cuban airspace, under the sovereignty of our country. With regard to the provocation, we would first have to wait for it, to respond later. My country does not use a hysterical tone, nor does it respond with alarm. I believe that if they are going to provoke us, I just wanted to ratify that the provocations against Cuba do not go unanswered.

In any case, there is apparently a different interpretation about the provocations. They are saying they will enter international waters. If they enter international waters, in all honesty, they will not be acting provocatively [words indistinct] international waters.

If they enter our waters, an act of provocation would be taking place, and the risk they will run will be the same as that run by those who try to violate Cuban airspace and territorial waters. [end recording]

As part of the irrefutable evidence on the policy of aggression against Cuba, perpetrated or allowed by the U.S. Government, the Foreign Relations Ministry reported a chronology of the violations from 1994 to 1996. The government of our country has repeatedly reported the violations of Cuban airspace.

On 15 May 1994, five aircraft from Florida violated the national airspace in the western region, between Cardenas, Matanzas Province, and Mariel, Havana Province.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

On 17 May 1994, two lightplanes from Florida violated airspace between Cardenas and Mariel. Also on 25 and 29 May 1994, five aircraft flew the same route between Cardenas and Mariel. On 10 July, a violation from the United States [words indistinct] was detected. In 1995, on 4 April, a small aircraft violated the national airspace between the towns of Santa Fe and Guanabo. Again, on 13 July 1995, four aircraft from the United States entered Cuban waters north of Havana, entering prohibited zone MUP-1, and they flew over Havana city. [words indistinct] and 13 January 1996, Cuban authorities detected two lightplanes from Opa Locka Airport, in Florida. On this occasion, they flew over Havana Province territory, dropping subversive propaganda. These leaflets urged citizens to launch attacks against Cuba's constitutional order.

All these violations have been reported to the U.S. Interest Section office in Havana.

Taking into account the repeated violations of our airspace, Cuban authorities have been forced to consider the temporary closing of the Giron international corridor for civilian aircraft and adopt restrictions on arrivals and departures at Varadero International Airport. The Foreign Relations Ministry of Cuba reported these and other incidents to the United States.

Cuba: Alarcon Cautions Against Violation of Territory

PA0203195696 Havana Cubavision Network in Spanish 1730 GMT 2 Mar 96

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Many foreign and local journalists are right now on Cuban territorial waters within the framework of facilities the Cuban Government has provided so the world can know about the provocations announced for today by Miami extremists.

Cuba, through Cuban Parliament President Ricardo Alarcon, has reiterated its warning that it will defend its sovereignty in the face of new actions by Miami terrorists.

[Begin Alarcon recording] I imagine that this time, they will remain in international waters because it would be hard to imagine that the U.S. Coast Guard, which will be there, will allow itself to become a witness and accomplice to a violation of international law.

I imagine that this time they will behave appropriately and that the U.S. authorities will impede the violation of Cuban space; because if not, this would not be a violation by a group of persons but by the U.S. Government, because this is an organized action. The authorities, which have the obligation to prevent an action of this nature, have organized an operation around them.

I want to believe that the U.S. authorities are not interested in provoking a more serious incident.

These people will make noise, do their propaganda work and hubbub, but they will behave properly. [end recording]

Cuba: Helms-Burton Bill Called 'Political Foolishness'

PA0203220096 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1755 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 2 Mar (NOTIMEX) — The leader of the Cuban Parliament, Ricardo Alarcon, has stated that the approval of the Helms-Burton Bill, which will harden the U.S. blockade against Cuba, will delay a solution to the historic differences between both countries.

This law "eliminates any illusions that could have been maintained regarding a solution to the differences between Cuba and the United States" and its revocation will be "indispensable to advancement along the path toward regulating future relations."

During a news conference in Havana on Friday night, Alarcon described as "the biggest political foolishness of the century" the belief that the entire world is going to acquiesce to the increased embargo on Cuba, although, he added, "a few businessmen could get apprehensive."

Alarcon regretted that the Clinton administration, which appeared to be against a few aspects of the bill, decided to join its Republican sponsors after Cuban war planes downed two U.S. civilian planes last week.

The president of the National Assembly of Cuba (unicameral parliament) said several governments have indicated that they will not tolerate its implementation and, thus, predicted that there will be "problems in U.S. foreign policy."

In his opinion, this law "will not achieve what it proposes," rather it "deprives the president (Clinton) from his authority to make modifications and places it in the hands of the U.S. Congress," which has a Republican majority.

The theory behind those laws is the alleged "imminent fall of the Cuban Revolution," but more than three years have passed since the Torricelli Law (October 1992) was implemented and it has not even deterred the Cubans from furthering their economy and commerce, he added.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

"What better guarantee can a European businessman have when he knows he will not have the competition of the United States in Cuba," Alarcon stated ironically. He also recalled that the mentioned bill proposes to return former properties in Cuba to people of Cuban origin who demand them.

"Such a wild plan can only be conceived by the Cuban-American mafia that, not only takes advantage of the United States, but also dupes its laws," he said in reference to the pressures made by the radical groups in exile to get the Helms-Burton Bill approved.

Alarcon predicted that the Helms-Burton Law is going to radically change the terms of the Cuban-United States differences and he asserted: "On this side, it will increase the unity and cohesion of the people against the U.S. policy."

Cuba: Alarcon Hopes U.S. Government To Prevent Incident

PA0203204896 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 2 Mar 96

[From the "National Radio News" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ricardo Alarcon, president of the National Assembly of the People's Government, described the U.S. Government's decision to escort, as a preventive measure, the counterrevolutionary flotilla as a commitment and a great responsibility, since they will be the first to witness what happens. During a news conference, Alarcon underscored that this can only be interpreted as an expression of the resolve by U.S. officials to do what is necessary to keep any flotilla participant from violating Cuban jurisdictional waters or airspace and triggering an incident.

In that regard, Alarcon added: I cannot believe otherwise. It would be absurd to think that they have some other purpose in mind that would make the U.S. Government the violators and not just a group of counterrevolutionaries anymore. He added: On the contrary, we took note of the sense of responsibility that they shouldered. We trust that they will truly prevent, in this manner, absolutely anything from happening.

Alarcon said that much remains to be done in the United States in order to avoid the future recurrence of such provocations. In that regard, he pointed out that the 24 February incidents should serve as an indication for them to see the convenience of starting to respect international law, the Chicago Convention, and, at least, the U.S. laws themselves.

Cuba: Havana in 'Absolute Calm,' 'Warship' Deployed

PA0203195496 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1810 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 2 Mar (EFE) — The Cuban capital was this morning in absolute calm in apparent disregard for the concentration of boats and small planes of exiles, strongly guarded by U.S. Coast Guard vessels, which is to take place in front of its coasts early this afternoon.

The authorities have permitted all newsmen who filed requests to board four Border Guard speedboats, although they were informed that they will not be taken past a 10-mile limit.

The speedboats with the newsmen left at noon, accompanied by a warship. At approximately the same time, another small warship cruised the Havana area coast from east to west and then turned north.

It was a sunny morning, but according to a metereologic report, in the afternoon there will be winds from 15 to 30 km per hour, with scattered rains and electric storms in Cuba's western region.

The president of the Cuban Parliament was asked during a recent news conference if the Cuban Armed Forces would go on a state of alert. Without going into details Ricardo Alarcon answered: "We have been on a state of alert for more than 35 years."

While the exile flotilla was heading for the site where two small airplanes were downed last Saturday to pay homage to the four pilots who died, the U.S. Interests Section in Havana sent a fax to foreign correspondents reporting data picked up by U.S. radar.

With a map showing the readings of the U.S. Customs Service radar, the United States insisted once again that the airplanes were downed in interntional waters and not in Cuban waters as Cuba maintains.

The Cuban authorities trust there will be no incident this time and that the deployment of U.S. military means is aimed at avoiding provocations.

Cuba: Border Guards Continue To Patrol Territorial Waters

PA0203225096 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2107 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 2 Mar (EFE) — Although the flotilla decided to turn back due to bad weather, Cuban troops will continue to guard their territorial waters and await the arrival of the approximately 20 lightplanes that belong to Cubans in exile.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

A border guard said to journalists who are accompanying a few of their units, that they will not return to Havana until the entire operation is concluded.

After learning that the 30 ships had turned back toward Key West without yet reaching their objective, another officer observed that "they (the Cubans in exile) should be happier than we. It is best that they return because their ships are very fragile."

"We are guarding our small area here," the officer asserted.

The authorities allowed all journalists, who requested it, to board four Border Guard speedboats and a fighter submarine. They, however, warned that they would not go beyond a 10-mile limit.

The flotilla, organized by the Brothers to the Rescue organization, had scheduled to get up to 21 miles from the Cuban coast to render homage to the four pilots who were killed when their planes were downed by the Cuban Air Force last Saturday.

Cuba: Robaina Speaks Out Against Escalation of Tensions

PA0103235096 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 2210 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 1 Mar (PL) — In a meeting with the media at the UN headquarters, Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina called today for calm and composure to avoid an escalation of tensions in the already uneasy relations between his country and the United States, when answering a question about attempts by anti-Cuban organizations to arrange a flotilla expedition to head for the place where two pirate planes were shot down on 24 February after having violated Cuban territorial waters and airspace.

He said that Cuba has been informed of this, but does not respond to threats with threats and is aware of the measures announced by the U.S. Government to put a limit on those actions to avoid further incidents in Cuban territorial waters.

"My government hopes and expects that the measures will be effective. They are, perhaps, the measures we have been requesting for a very long time, and I can only tell you that in the follow-up concerning the fulfillment of these measures from the office of President (William) Clinton in keeping with the announcement, my country will act with as much moderation as possible to prevent new incidents from occurring," he said.

Robaina said that Cuba has always wanted these measures to be adopted and if we can say that today it is because of the information received on the series of measures adopted by the United States to prevent further incidents from taking place in Cuban territorial waters.

"My country has no intention of promoting an escalation fostered by extreme right-wing Cuban-American groups," he added.

In this regard, he concurred with previous statements made by Democratic Congressman Charles Rangel to the media accredited at the United Nations, who said that U.S. foreign policy toward Cuba is dictated by the right-wing groups in Miami.

He said the 24 February incidents represented a moment of great tension between Cuba and the United States, but the existing relations between the two countries should not be blown out of proportion.

"I believe the only thing we can talk about is the lack of relations between Cuba and the United States and it is difficult for them to be more tense than they already are," he said.

Cuba: Foreign Minister on Motives For 24 Feb Provocations

PA0203002296 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 2115 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 1 Mar (PL) — Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina asserted today that the latest provocations against Cuba were aimed at disrupting the atmosphere between his country and the United States.

In a meeting with the media at the UN, Robaina said these actions sought to obstruct some of the steps taken, including discussions on the Helms-Burton bill in certain U.S. circles.

Nevertheless, he said, Cuba must make an assessment; it cannot consider the 24 February incidents (the shooting down of two pirate airplanes when they flew over Cuban jurisdiction) as isolated actions without a previous record or devoid of evidence that is constantly submitted to the public opinion's consideration.

Cuba reasserts that it issued all the warnings possible through all possible channels, and it resorted to many alternatives before interrupting the flights; and it states above all that it deplores the loss of human lives, he said.

Robaina remarked: However, Cuba must ratify before the international community that we feel for our sovereignty and airspace the same respect and attachment that any nation has for what it considers sacred.

"With the same passion that the United States defended its airspace we defend ours," he emphasized.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

"My country has no intention of taking steps to fulfill the wishes of that extreme right so we have been very patient and we have calmly evaluated statements issued in recent hours, and what may happen on future occasions," Robaina said.

The foreign minister was referring to the measures ordered by the White House, to prevent a violation of Cuban jurisdiction during this Saturday's possible actions, orchestrated by those groups from Florida.

Cuba: Anti-Castro Group Pays Homage to Missing Pilots

PA0203225796 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2222 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Miami (United States), 2 Mar (EFE) — A group of 22 small private planes today managed to overfly the area, where two aircraft of the "Brothers to the Rescue" group of exiled Cubans were downed last week by Cuban MiGs, to offer a brief religious service and drop a wreath in honor of the four occupants who disappeared.

A flotilla of 30 ships that left Key West, in the southern tip of Florida, early today to carry out a similar ceremony at that site, located 21 nautical miles north of Cuba, was unable to do so due to the strong waves and wind. [passage omitted]

Cuba: End of 'Counterrevolutionary' Provocations

PA0203233796 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 2244 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a publicity display staged in international waters at more than 20 miles off the Cuban coasts, it seems that a new chapter of the long history of provocations orchestrated against Cuba by counterrevolutionary organizations has ended today, and [words indistinct] the show [words indistinct] the bad weather conditions that adversely affected the ceremony, which was considered a posthumous tribute.

Under the headline "The United States Takes Responsibility to Prevent New Provocations," the Cuban official daily GRANMA today published [words indistinct] Parliament President Ricardo Alarcon, who described as very good Washington's decision to prevent a new provocation against his country.

In statements to the U.S. television network CNN, Alarcon said that it would have been [words indistinct] if a long time ago Washington authorities had taken the necessary measures to avoid a long list of provocations against Cuba that were perpetrated with civilian boats and planes from U.S. territory.

Cuba: Station Commentary on Fate of Flotilla

PA0303024896 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 3 Mar 96

["Station commentary" read by Pedro Martinez Pirez; from the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The rain, the wind, and the waves, but above all, the serenity and firmness of Cuba, and the U.S. commitment to avoid new incidents, put an end on 2 March with much sorrow and little glory to the so—called freedom flotilla organized by the extreme right of the Cuban emigres, exactly one week after the downing of two pirate aircraft that violated Cuba's airspace.

Bad weather in the Florida Straits, coupled with the willingness of the two countries to avoid increased tension, cut short and took away luster from the propaganda show of the Brothers to the Rescue counterrevolutionary organization in which they remembered the death of four of their pilots.

As opposed to 24 February, when the pirate planes of Brothers to the Rescue overflew with impunity prohibited zones of the Cuban airspace, on this occasion the U.S. authorities exerted due control on individuals who have shown on many occasions that they are provocative agents seeking to increase differences between Washington and Havana and to take advantage of this electoral year in the United States.

The week following 24 February left many lessons. The United States has the responsibility to prevent pirate planes from leaving its territory to provoke Cuba, or any other American nation. It also has the responsibility to prevent mafioso groups from Florida from turning the Cuban issue into a U.S. domestic policy issue, leading politicians of that nation to get involved in a dangerous meddlesome escalation in our country.

The battle of Cuba to restore [words indistinct] has not ended. The voice of Cuba should be heard at the UN General Assembly. The magnitude of the anti—Cuban conspiracy and the names of its protagonists will be exposed then, because the battle of Cuba is also the battle for the dignity and the sovereignty of all nations.

Cuba: 'Wisdom Prevailed,' Flotilla Returned

PA0303035296 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cubavision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 3 Mar 96

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer] We were telling you that, markedly far away from the Cuban coasts, a group of extreme rightist emigres from Miami carried out the operation they had planned for 2 March.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

[Reporter Vladia Rubio] If a new violation of the national territory had occurred, 69 domestic and foreign correspondents from 53 media, to whom the Cuban state made it easier to report the events, would have been witnesses. We boarded a submarine chaser of the Revolutionary Navy at 1100 hours. Meanwhile, approximately 20 vessels carrying Cuban emigres from Florida were sailing toward a point in international waters near Cuba, where, according to them, the 24 February events took place. This time, wisdom prevailed, and U.S. Coast Guard vessels escorted the flotilla. During the first hours of the voyage, expectations heightened aboard the Cuban vessel.

We are exactly nine miles north of Cojimar. As you can see, there is complete calmness in our waters. Later in the afternoon, the plan of the emigres' flotilla changed. Alleging bad weather, more than half of them returned to Key West. Approximately 15 lightplanes joined those who continued on their way to hold the foretold ceremony of throwing flowers at the site where allegedly the planes of the so-called subversive organization, Brothers to the Rescue, were downed.

[Announcer] The Cuban emigres who were intending to stage a protest in front of Cuban coasts and to pay homage to the four civilian pilots who died on 24 February decided to hold the ceremony 37 km off the planned site. The U.S. Coast Guard, with 12 vessels and two planes, were in charge of supervising at all times the security of the civil vessels.

[Reporter Marta Moreno] Hours went by, and tension started to ebb aboard the Cuban vessel. At approximately 1500 hours, there were three- to four-meter high waves. However, the vessel transporting the correspondents remained on the lookout. The violation did not occur, however. During the voyage, we witnessed how the Cuban Border Guards and the U.S. Coast Guard contacted one another. According to what was leaked, these contacts took place by fax and over the radio in an effort to monitor the flotilla's moves and prevent incidents.

This time, there were no violations. Among other things, the measures the United States took worked. If they had acted liked this on previous occasions, history would have been different. Therefore, if similar actions are carried out, it has been proven that there are ways to prevent incidents.

Late in the afternoon, the submarine chaser returned, while the Cuban border guards remained to guard our territory.

[Begin recording] [Moreno] What do you think of all this?

[First unidentified speaker] From a historical standpoint, it was interesting because I believe that very few Americans have the opportunity to board a vessel like this one. From a journalistic standpoint, I am pleased that nothing happened.

[Second unidentified speaker] It seems to me that Cuba was right in doing what it did, because if something had happened, there were witnesses and reporters from the international media [words indistinct] what could have happened. We were lucky nothing happened. [end recording]

Cuba: Operation To Guard Coasts Ends Without Incidents

PA0303032296 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0104 GMT 03 Mar 96

[Report by Ulises Canales]

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 2 Mar (PL) — Cuba today ended without incident a work day in defense of its sovereignty. The operation was mobilized to confront an announcement made by groups of Cuban exiles in the United States that said they would hold a ceremony in the open sea to mark the downing of the two pirate lightplanes that invaded Cuban territorial waters.

After more than six hours, the chiefs of the approximately 10 Cuban Border Guard vessels that patrolled Cuban territorial waters this Friday, considered the mission assigned to them as successful because "there had been no incidents and we preserved our country's integrity."

Such were the views expressed to PRENSA LATINA by Amaury Sierra, commander of the Griff 502 vessel that was stationed approximately 10 miles off the coast of Havana to prevent aggressive actions by the anti-Cuban organization "Brothers to the Rescue" and other groups that are also hostile to their country of origin.

Two lightplanes of the mentioned organization were downed by Cuban fighter MiGs last Saturday, when they did not heed the warnings that they were violating national air space. For this reason, the organization summoned its members to a ceremony off the island's coast in remembrance of the four pilots who perished during this action.

Sierra highlighted that their orders were to keep the Griff vessels within the maritime area belonging to Cuba so that, if the boundaries were trespassed, there would be no doubt whatsoever of the action, which did not happen.

"Our orders were to protect the waters within the limits of the Republic of Cuba and to stop anyone from

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

entering them and, if this happened, to obtain evidence of the violation," the 24-year-old officer underscored. He also emphasized his willingness to preserve the territorial integrity of this country "at any cost."

Foreign and national photographers and journalists made the cruise on board Revolutionary Navy ships and PRENSA LATINA witnessed that all the arsenal of all the ships remained covered and at a 45-degree angle, including the ones of the infantry.

"We only have nonlethal instruments (cables, ropes, and others), in addition to megaphones, to persuade whoever tries to violate our laws not to do so," Sierra explained.

Cuba: Havana Residents Remain Calm Despite Threats

PA0303034196 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0114 GMT 3 Mar 96

[By Javier Rodriguez]

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 2 Mar (PL) — Numerous families strolling along the seawall in the capital, despite the first winds of a new cold front, and numerous youths listening to popular music along the main road of this city were part of the scene in Havana today.

A tour of various neighborhoods offered additional evidence of a normalcy that is habitual to Cubans but that surprised some foreign journalists, many of whom have been in Cuba for the past few days and some of whom were sent to report on an alleged atmosphere of fear, uneasiness, and crisis.

Markets full of the usual Saturday shopping crowds, handicraft salesmen tending to a large number of customers, and the main theater, full of people attending the premier of a Mexican comedy, were among the sights.

The truth is that there were foreign reporters who did not hide their surprise of a lack of tension and worry that they obviously expected to find in an island threatened by the mightiest military power of the universe located only 90 miles away.

Quite the contrary, the Cubans exhibited the most stunning tranquillity today, even though they had learned about the punitive sanctions imposed by Washington against the island by request of the most stubborn groups headquartered in Florida.

Everyone heard reports on the advance toward areas near Cuba's air and maritime limits by ships and planes manned by those elements, even protected by missile-equipped U.S. naval vessels.

It is not that the population is unaware of the dangers that this conflict poses, because dozens of years of the Cuban-U.S. quarrel has made the citizens of the Caribbean nation aware of the difficulties that opposition to foreign dictates has brought upon them.

The resistance shown in demanding respect for sovereignty seems to have helped Cubans strengthen their spirits and match serenity with firmness.

Amateur fishermen on makeshift vessels off the Bay of Havana and youths eating ice cream by the sea today underscored a popular phrase that one of them voiced at this special time: "Havana does not believe in fear."

Cuba: Robaina Meets With Cuban Community in U.S.

PA0303041596 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0121 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 2 Mar (PL) — Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina today praised the support given to his country by members of the Cuban community in the United States and their defense of the fatherland's independence and sovereignty.

At an event in New York today, which was attended by people residing in New Jersey, Miami, California, Washington, and Puerto Rico, Robaina said he would go to the high court of the United Nations to present Cuba's truth and that he would have, not only the support of the island's 11 million inhabitants but also, the support of his fellow countrymen who reside in this country.

The meeting took place at the Saint Mary Episcopal Church in the black community of Harlem and the presentation was made by Pastor Luis Barrios. The pastor said there is no better place for an act of justice than the house of God and that is why he had offered this beautiful locale with the Cuban flag on the altar for the event.

After giving a detailed explanation of the events at the United Nations after the two pirate planes that were flying over Cuban territorial skies and waters were downed on 24 February, Robaina referred to the objectives pursued by this and other violations.

In this respect, he said, one of the objectives of the ultrarightist sectors in Miami is precisely to cut off the ties that have been established by the fatherland with its sons abroad, regardless of ideological differences. However, Robaina asserted that the course launched by the Cuban government in this direction would not be reversed.

He said that for this reason, Cuba had decided to begin this process by presenting the first 100 travel validity documents here in the United States at the same time

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

that a group of people who, having been born in the island by mistake, were going in a provocative action towards the island's coasts.

Robaina praised the way the Cuban residents have stood by the Cuban people and defended their country's independence and sovereignty during these difficult days in front of television cameras and in demonstrations in places that are hostile to them. They have done so at a time when it would have been more pleasant for them to turn against the country. They have, however, preferred to take the most honorable stance.

This shows, he added, that you do not have to be in the country to feel that its sovereignty has been violated, because we have the fatherland in our hearts, not necessarily the place where we are living.

Sometimes there is talk, Robaina said, of Cubans from inside and outside, but the important thing is to be Cuban inside, and this is what we all are.

The foreign minister referred to Cuba's efforts to gather support to take its truth of the history of violations to its air space and its sovereignty over the past 20 months, including the 24 February incidents, to the UN General Assembly. He also mentioned the possibility that such a meeting will be held next week.

He stressed that Cuba has the right to tell what it thinks about what happened, not to the Security Council or the United States, but to the international community. He disclosed that his country has overwhelming evidence on this and other incidents.

Robaina also said that on occasion Cuba's geographic position is mentioned in fatalistic terms, in the sense of being so far from God and yet so close to the United States.

But today, precisely at this time, in the United States, in this house of God, Cubans were united for the sovereignty and independence of their fatherland, accompanied by Latin Americans and North Americans, Robaina emphasized.

During the event, Bruno Rodriguez, Cuba's permanent representative at the United Nations, thoroughly explained the 24 February incidents, the background of the violations and charges that Cuba had presented to U.S. authorities in the hope that measures be taken.

To Cuba's surprise, no measures were taken and, after all efforts were exhausted, we felt compelled to interrupt the flight of the pirate planes, he commented.

Cuba: Report Notes International 'Gestures of Solidarity'

PA0303142896 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1300 GMT 3 Mar 96

[From the "Morning Information Review" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The European Union has rejected the U.S. decision to intensify the blockade on Cuba and to punish third countries that invest on the island as part of the latest measures adopted against the Caribbean island following the downing of two lightplanes that flew from U.S. territory, violating Cuban airspace.

Juan Pratt, general director of foreign relations for Latin America of the EU, has said in Caracas his organization does not accept under any concept unilateral measures against the Cuban economy as established by the Helms—Burton bill.

More than 30 solidarity organizations in Canada have defended Cuba's right to defend its integrity, in reference to last week's incident when planes flown by the counterrevolutionary organization Brothers to the Rescue violated Cuban airspace. Likewise, Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien has called U.S. President William Clinton via telephone to convey his displeasure over the threats made against those who trade or invest in Cuba.

In Mexico, the Latin American Federation of Journalists has stated it was troubled over the campaigns to provide distorted information about the downing of two pirate planes that invaded Cuban skies. This downing has increased the atmosphere of tension in the area, the federation has stated.

Gestures of solidarity with Cuba were also expressed in Sao Paulo, Brazil, by the Journalists Union, the General Central Organization of Workers, the Union of Students, as well as the Afro-Brazilian National Congress, and the Brazilian Communist Party based in that city.

Cuba: Former Rescue Pilot Denies Media Charges

PA0303203496 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1725 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Havana, 3 Mar (... ...n not what many people believe I am. I want ... ...f this society again," Juan Pablo Roque, forme... ...ers to the Rescue pilot, has said here, adding that he was never an enemy of the government of Cuba, which he left for personal reasons.

In a statement published by the weekly JUVENTUD REBELDE today, Roque has denied charges by certain

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

foreign media accusing him of being "a Cuban security agent" and has said that when he left the island in 1992, he was not running away from a government with which he disagreed; rather, "I was running away from myself, my problems," he has confessed.

Roque returned to Havana on Sunday after being a member of the anti-Cuban organization for three years and said his return that day was merely a coincidence with the incident on 24 March and "has nothing to do with the events."

Similarly, the former "Brothers" member has denounced the financing received by this group from the Cuban-American right-wing radicals. He even has said Congresswoman Ileana Ross asked the White House to give them military aircraft used in the antiguerrilla fight in Vietnam.

Roque has said that the group later coincidentally received donations of civilian "versions" of those planes, adding that he has always had negative references about this organization, but "I became involved with Brothers to the Rescue because they had planes and I am a pilot. I had to fly."

After denouncing the group's activities to the FBI, he explained the powerlessness of seeing how this organization was incapable of halting the actions against Cuba. This attitude made him understand that "all these people only want to recover what they lost (...), to take position and to decide Cuba's future," and this is why he began considering the possibility of returning to the island.

Roque has said he has received normal treatment for someone who has returned and is asking to stay in Cuba. I have been assisted by the Foreign Ministry and Immigration. "I am only waiting for them to decide my situation."

Cited by JUVENTUD REBELDE, Roque added that there are many people in Miami with the same views, "people who think like me and would do the same. Many of them helped me to do what I did." This weekly also published a photograph of him and his two children in Havana.

Cuba: Commentary Says U.S. Policy 'Not at All Serious'

PA0303235996 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cubavision Networks in Spanish 1800 GMT 3 Mar 96

[Commentary by Eduardo Dimas; from the "NTV Sunday Supplement" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is difficult to talk about an absurd policy without getting into ironies, which, because of what is at stake, I find distasteful. However, the fact that the world's most powerful nation — now in the middle of its electoral campaign — is using the most illegitimate ploys to achieve its objectives is very absurd.

For instance, it is very absurd that this nation is using the annex of an international law that has not been ratified and therefore, lacks legal power, to try to condemn a nation only because it tried to defend its sovereignty. The most absurd part of this matter is that the United States itself has not even approved the said law. The maneuver was so unethical that the U.S. Government delayed issuing a visa to Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina so that he could not arrive on time for the meeting of the UN Security Council. The United States also took advantage of the fact that during February, its representative held the Presidency of the Security Council.

However, despite all of this, the United States was unable to pass a resolution to condemn Cuba; what they obtained was a declaration that underwent strong modifications and which says that it deplores the downing of the two pirate planes and asks the two sides and the International Civil Aviation Organization to investigate the incident. In fact, the loss of prestige they have brought upon themselves is far greater than what they have gained. As is known, Cuba has asked that the 50th session of the UN General Assembly be resumed, and in this request, Cuba has the support of a large group of Third World countries. Obviously, the United States opposes this step.

The most absurd part of all are the measures adopted directly by the United States against Cuba. It seems that the policy toward our country is being dictated in Miami, but this is only a superficial assessment, because what the Democratic administration truly wants is to score points with the ultra—rightist sectors of the U.S. society. We should not forget that they are in the middle of an electoral campaign. Thus, although the Clinton administration had, on several occasions, voiced its disagreement with the Helms-Burton Bill because of the international problems it would provoke, it has now announced its willingness to approve it.

Without a doubt, President Clinton has been characterized by his contradictions, but, in short, this is Mr. Clinton's problem, although it is very absurd that he suspended the remittances of money to authorize them later and to prohibit them again. The same situation applies to the trips by the Cuban emigrants. It is as though he is now choosing to use the stick and put the carrot away to later offer the carrot again and then withdraw

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

it again to continue using the stick. This is a totally incoherent policy.

In short, this is the U.S. policy against Cuba. No one doubts that this policy is absurd, unethical, and unprincipled, but above all, it is not at all serious.

Cuba: TV Shows 'New Evidence' of Airspace Violation

PA0403041596 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 2051 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cuba today produced new evidence to back its position on the 24 February downing of two small airplanes from the United States that violated the island's airspace five to eight miles north of Havana Province.

The "NTV" newscast showed at noon today objects of a technical nature that were found by a Cuban search and rescue team approximately 9.3 miles from the Cuban coast, "which demonstrates where the incident took place," according to the information.

Navigation charts, a bag, and a portable battery recharger are some of the objects found on 25 February that were shown on Cuban television.

Following a brief but well-detailed chronological report on the most serious violations of Cuban airspace and waters by rightist sectors of the Cuban community in Miami since 1959, "NTV" gave a detailed explanation of the 24 February events.

The report gave the exact time at which the successive incursions into Cuban airspace by planes from the "Brothers to the Rescue" group took place. The incursions began in the morning of that day.

"NTV" said that the report on the activated zones invaded by the airplanes from the United States were made known by the Aeronautic Information System to the corresponding authorities on 19 February "making it clear (...) that this status would be in effect from 21 to 28 February."

"NTV" noted that the planes were not flying according to international and national civil aviation regiations since the planes never reported their takeoffs or their flight plans and did not establish communication with Cuban aviation authorities.

"NTV" reported: Events moved rapidly (that day), "in the narrow margin that the airplanes' speed and the reduced limit of our airspace impose, but this is confirmation that the actions were carried out with good sense and professionalism."

The note concludes by stating: Everything could have been avoided and we did everything possible in that regard. The U.S. authorities alone could have prevented this.

Cuba: TV Details 24 Feb Downing Incident

PA0403054296 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cubavision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 4 Mar 96

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Passage omitted] As we have been reporting, at 0933 on 24 February, the National Flight Control Center received the flight plan for Cessna-type planes that were to take off from the Opa Locka airstrip in Florida.

At 1016, Cuban radio location stations spotted six aircraft at a distance of between 40 and 50 kilometers north of Santa Cruz del Norte, Havana Province, and north of Havana.

At 1016 [time repeated as heard], an aircraft was located northwest of Havana, and at 1021, a second aircraft was located north of Santa Cruz del Norte. In view of this, at 1024, a maximum alert was issued for the fighter interceptor planes of the Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR]. At 1040, these planes were in the air with the mission of identifying the aircraft that were nearby flying toward our airspace.

The flights of these aircraft were not in accordance with international and domestic civic aviation regulations because they never reported their takeoffs or flight plans. In addition, when they entered our flight information region they did not establish contact with our aviation authorities. For this reason, at 1040, Cuban aviation authorities asked the Miami Air Traffic Control Center for information, and it replied that it had no information about that.

At 1043, an aircraft was spotted north of Havana, and at 1047 and up to 1117, the unidentified airplanes, after entering our airspace, began to withdraw north-northeast bound due to the presence of Cuban planes that were patrolling our area until 1130, when they were ordered to return.

At 1225, the National Center for Flight Plans and Control received from the Atlanta Messenger Center the flight plans for another three aircraft that were to take off from Opa Locka, and at 1239 the first of these planes appeared north of Santa Cruz del Norte. At 1243, the Cuban fighters received orders to go on maximum alert. At 1251, the second aircraft was spotted northwest of Havana, and in view of this new provocation, at 1256, the FAR fighter-interceptor planes were ordered to take off. At 0257, the three airplanes established communication with the Havana Air Traffic Control

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Center on the 133.7 megacycles and were told that their flight was within a dangerous zone that had been activated.

One of these airplanes replied that they knew it but would take the risk.

[Begin recording] [Basulto] For your information, we are transferring our area of operations north of Havana today, thus, we will be in your area and in contact with you. A friendly greeting from Brothers to the Rescue and its president Jose Basulto, speaking.

[Unidentified Cuban air traffic comptroller] Where [words indistinct] sir?

[Basulto] We are returning to the area north of Havana. [words indistinct] We are aware that we are in danger every time we cross the area south of 24 but we are willing to do so under our status as free Cubans. [end recording]

It is important to stress that the information on the dangerous zones has been circulated internationally through the aviation information system to the pertinent authorities since 19 February. It was very clearly established that these zones would go into effect from 21 to 28 February from 0800 to 1830.

At 0300, the third aircraft appeared north of Santa Cruz del Norte, and at 0308, one of the aircraft entered the airspace of the Republic of Cuba, and its interception and identification were ordered.

At 0313, the Cuban fighter reported that it spotted two aircraft and was ordered to demand their identification. This included a warning, but there was no reply.

At 0318, when the aircraft were at a distance of between five and eight miles off the coast, the Cuban fighter was ordered to interrupt their flight.

Later on, it was ordered to remain waiting for the units that were to participate in the search and rescue operations.

At 0320, another aircraft was spotted 10 nautical lines off the north coast of Havana.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified Brothers to the Rescue member] [Words indistinct] five zero six.

[Unidentified Cuban air traffic comptroller] Five zero six, Havana.

[Unidentified Brothers to the Rescue member] This is a friendly greeting [words indistinct] north of Havana proceeding with our course of search and rescue operations [words indistinct]. It is a beautiful day. Havana looks very nice from where we are. A friendly greeting to you and all the Cuban people on behalf of Brothers to the Rescue.

[Unidentified Cuban air traffic comptroller] Havana received.

At 0332, a Cuban fighter-interceptor plane spotted this aircraft and ordered it to identify itself. However, by that time, it had left Cuban airspace and was flying away from our territory.

At 0334, the interceptor plane was ordered to stop its persecution and return to the airstrip.

A FAR search and rescue helicopter had already taken off at 0322 [words indistinct] surface units of the Border Guard Troops for those missions.

The search and rescue operations by our helicopters and surface units of the Border Guard Troops continued through 25 February, and at 1000 on that day, a bunch of technical objects were located 9.3 miles off the Havana coast — which indicates the site where the incident happened. These objects included navigation charts, a briefcase, and a portable battery charger.

The incident happened very quickly, in a matter of minutes and within the small margin imposed by the speed of the aircraft and the reduced limit of our airspace. However, these incidents confirmed that we acted calmly and in a professional manner.

We have again become victims of the enemy's repeated actions without being the least bit responsible for the provocation that led to the problem. All this could have been avoided, and we did everything possible to avoid it. However, it was not in our hands, and only the U.S. authorities could have prevented it.

In view of these new provocations and agressions, our people remain firm and calm, fully devoted to the peaceful and creative work that will allow us to take solid steps in the country's economic recovery.

Our sovereignty cannot be questioned. Our people's fighting spirit and determination to achieve victory are unalterable in the face of any threat. This is a struggle of fatherland or death.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Mexico: Certification Process Said To Create 'Tensions'

PA0103174896 Mexico City LA JORNADA in Spanish 1 Mar 96

[Report by David Aponte — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. Government's certification process "has created tensions that might jeopardize" bilateral cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking. The Mexican Government believes the two countries must find formulas for cooperation "based on mutual respect and trust," the Mexican Secretariat of Foreign Relations (SRE) pointed out in a diplomatic note presented yesterday to the Department of State.

The administration of President Ernesto Zedillo gives precedence to the fight on drugs and organized crime, and has assumed the commitment of achieving specific results in this area, as it believes this problem is the leading threat to its national security, the SRE argued.

A few hours away from the White House's evaluation of Mexico's efforts and programs in drug trafficking matters, the SRE sent a diplomatic note to the Department of State, with a proposal to draft the agenda for the coming meeting of the Binational Commission, scheduled in Mexico City for 6 and 7 May.

The document outlines the key topics of the bilateral agenda: Cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking, as well as matters of consular protection, immigration, and border cooperation. The SRE indicated this in a press communique.

Regarding the first topic, it stressed that the Governments of Mexico and the United States should seek acceptable formulas to strengthen the determination to cooperate based on mutual respect and trust.

"Aware that the 'certification of cooperation' of other countries with the United States in the fight against drug trafficking constitutes a U.S. domestic process, the Mexican Government emphasizes its viewpoint that this process creates tensions that might jeopardize cooperation in this area," the note added.

An SRE source noted that the SRE had to establish its stance to this effect, but it also had to draft proposals designed to promote an increased cooperation with a view to the next meeting of the Binational Commission.

"Confident that the spirit of cooperation on current [de coyuntura] considerations will prevail," the SRE proposed that prior to the next ministerial meeting, the governments should adopt specific actions on the issues of drug trafficking, immigration, and border cooperation, and prepare an agenda to review the achievements made.

From a legal viewpoint, he considered the need to implement a more efficient extradition system to keep countries from being used as a refuge to evade justice; to create a high-level binational group to more effectively combat the big drug traffickers' organizations, and to revise binational counterdrug programs and agreements to improve their effectiveness.

He also presented the need to improve cooperation for stopping the diversion of chemical precursors, including those used in the production of methamphetamines, and initiate the negotiation of an agreement to facilitate training, technical support, and the purchase of modern equipment to fight drugs in accordance with each country's laws and policies.

"The Mexican Government has increased its efforts on this matter and promoted legislative initiatives to provide a juridical framework to meet the needs and challenges that such an action entails." In the next period of Congress sessions, the Executive will present two bills to combat organized crime and prevent and punish money laundering, he said.

The foreign relations secretary said: "Given drug trafficking's transnational nature, fighting it requires international cooperation with an integrated and jointly responsible approach, a cooperation that takes into consideration every link in the crime chain (production, traffic, distribution, and consumption). Such cooperation is all the more necessary because, like in the cases of Mexico and the United States, the involved countries are neighbors that share a border more than 3,000 km long."

Regarding consular protection, immigration, and coopeation at the border, the secretary mentioned the following aspects: Urging measures to facilitate documented immigration by issuing border crossing cards to local residents, and improving and enlarging checkposts; improving agreements for safe and orderly repatriation; assessing the voluntary repatriation program, and keeping consulates and Immigration and Naturalization Service officials in touch with one another to protect the immigrants' human rights.

He also proposed paying more attention to incidents of violence and crime; attacking organizations that smuggle human beings; giving impetus to measures to protect the environment at the border, and urging the construction of new bridges to expedite both civilian border crossings and trade.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Guatemala

Guatemala: Abductors Release U.S. Citizen Without Ransom

PA0303171096 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1604 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Guatemala City, 3 Mar (ACAN-EFE) — It was learned today that U.S. national Claire Phillips, who lives in Guatemala and who was abducted on 1 March in a neighborhood in southern Guatemala City, was released last night by her abductors.

Phillips, 64, told the media the abductors told her they had abducted her by mistake, the reason why they decided to release her without demanding any ransom.

Despite this incident, the U.S. national said she will remain in Guatemala, while the U.S. Embassy stated it was pleased with Phillips' release.

On 1 March, Howard Turner Clark, a U.S. businessman living in Guatemala and who had been kidnapped by a group of criminals two days earlier, was also released.

The relatives of Turner Clark, 70, paid a substantial ransom for his release.

Turner owns a ranch in southeastern Guatemala, owns shares of a prestigious hotel in Guatemala City, and is one of the sponsors of the Miss Guatemala beauty pageant.

According to the records of the National Police, approximately 50 abductions have been reported in 1996, but congressmen have noted that at least 150 people, particularly ranchers, have been kidnapped this year.

Panama

Panama: Government Pleased With U.S. Certification

PA0203210196 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 1730 GMT 2 Mar 96

["Midday Television News" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Panamanian authorities have stated satisfaction over the U.S. Government's decision to acknowledge Panama as a country that struggles against drug trafficking.

[Begin Gabriel Castro recording] We are pleased that countries like the United States, and others, have acknowledged our anti-drug trafficking struggle.

The Perez Balladares administration is not doing this to obtain U.S. acknowledgment or anything like that, but because we know we have to fight drug trafficking and money laundering in Panama.

Before arriving in office, President Perez Balladares said that this is what he would do and we are doing it.

Obviously, recognition by a country like the United States is gratifying. However, we fight drugs because we must. [end recording]

Panama: 'Pleased' With U.S. Decision on Certification

PA0303171296 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 3 Mar 96 p 4

[Report by Vilma E. Figueroa B.]

[FBIS Translated Text] Panamanian President Ernesto Perez Balladares has said he is pleased with the U.S. Government's decision to accept, by means of a certification, that Panama is cooperating appropriately in the international fight against drugs and money laundering.

"We are, of course, pleased that the United States has recognized the efforts Panama has made in the fight against drug trafficking, but we would have done the same thing with or without a certification, because our government, our country, and the authorities are convinced of the need to wage this struggle and to win it," Perez Balladares has said.

The United States is Pleased With the Arrest of Alberto Laila and Israel Murdok

The president has said that even though his government is pleased with the decision, that is not the reason for Panama's commitment to the struggle against drug trafficking.

Meanwhile, Gabriel Castro, director of the Security and National Defense System of the State, whose job was praised by Robert Gelbard, assistant secretary for international narcotics and law enforcement affairs, after the announcement was made in Washington, has said the Panamanian Government is fighting drug trafficking and money laundering not because of the recognition but because it knows this is what needs to be done to face this problem.

When the announcement was made public in Washington, Gelbard said he was pleased with the arrest of Alberto Laila and Israel Murdok in Panama City.

He has said that Murdok, who was deported from Panama to the United States, has pleaded guilty to two of the charges that were filed against him in U.S. courts.

When the certification was issued, it was also mentioned that the Panamanian Government has done a good job in eradicating coca plantations near the border with Colombia, but it was also mentioned that the levels of

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

money laundering in Panama continue to be a source of concern for the U.S. Government.

Panama: Panama Not To Back Out of Fight on Drugs

PA0103155096 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 1 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Manuel Alvarez Cedeno]

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Gabriel Lewis Galindo has said that Panama will not back out "even a millimeter" in the fight against drug trafficking, and added that the country will continue to have in General Barry McCaffrey, recently appointed U.S. drug czar, a great ally in this crusade.

Lewis Galindo explained that due to Panama's proximity to Colombia and the advantages of the international banking center, Panama is an attractive territory for the narcomafias.

However, he remarked that "this does not mean, as has been fully corroborated, that we have not waged a strong campaign against international drug trafficking."

This effort has been undertaken "in close collaboration with international organizations, and particularly with U.S. officials like Roberto Gelbart, with whom we have worked painstakingly," he added.

U.S. Ambassador to Panama William Hughes said this week that Panama is cooperating in the fight on drugs, and added that all of the countries must cooperate in this fight on a permanent basis.

To this effect, Lewis Galindo maintained that "we have taken the U.S. diplomat's remarks for their true worth and scope: It is totally true that, together, we have many tasks to accomplish."

The Panamanian foreign minister also referred to the recent appointment of McCaffrey as the new U.S. drug czar. Gen. McCaffrey held the position of chief commander of the Southern Command, located in the Canal area.

Lewis said that McCaffrey and his wife Gill Faulkener shared their great warmth with numerous friends, who will miss them, but who also "share the general's happiness for such a high honor, worthy of a great North American."

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Argentina

Argentina: 'Disagreements' With Christopher on Trade

PY0103230596 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 1 Mar 96 pp 2, 3

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Passage omitted] The U.S. secretary of state's enthusiastic praise continued throughout the day, which ended with a meeting with [President Carlos Saul] Menem at the Olivos residence and a dinner hosted by Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella at the Alvear Hotel. [passage omitted]

For his part, Di Tella also pointed out that Christopher's visit was "extremely important." Di Tella even indulged in a challenge to diplomatic formality, joking: "He comes here seldom, sporadically. If we were a country in the Middle East, he would come every two weeks. But we behave well." [passage omitted]

Shortly afterward, Di Tella became cautious when he was asked if Argentina endorsed the decision of imposing trade sanctions against countries — in this case, Cuba — whenever other type of conflicts are involved.

Foreign Minister Di Tella acknowledged that, during the conversations, "disagreements" over trade issues arose. In a diplomatic tone now, he was actually referring to the pharmaceutical patents issue. [passage omitted]

Argentina: Official Stresses Christopher Remarks

PY0103232396 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1357 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Buenos Aires, 1 Mar (TELAM) — Alberto Kohan, the secretary general of the Presidency, today emphasized the fact that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has praised the economic policy implemented by President Carlos Menem and Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo.

Kohan told Radio Continental: "Obviously, (Christopher) is recognizing the economy minister's achievements and, of course, the president's achievements."

The U.S. secretary of state, who remained in Argentina from 28 February to the morning of 1 March, yesterday delivered a speech, emphasizing: "In our (the U.S. people's) opinion, and bearing in mind his achievements, together with President Menem's achievements, Cavallo is a hero."

Kohan pointed out that, through Christopher's message, "it can be grasped that Argentina is taking important steps forward, and that there are men who are partaking in this process."

Argentina: Christopher's Cavallo Remarks 'Controversial'

PY0103235996 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2035 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 1 Mar (NA) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said yesterday that Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo was a "hero." Vice President Carlos Ruckauf confirmed this appreciation of Cavallo, while [U.S.] Ambassador to Argentina James Cheek noted that this epithet should be applied "to the entire Argentine people." [Former President] Raul Alfonsin and other Radical Civic Union [UCR] leaders, however, harshly criticized it. [passage omitted]

In voicing his opinion about the controversial phrase that the U.S. secretary of state uttered yesterday, the vice president said that Cavallo "is an exceptionally good minister, who is making a tremendous effort to find a solution to the problems" confronting our country.

Ruckauf, speaking on the radio, added: "I am convinced that Cavallo is an honorable person, but he is also a human being, and as such, he is unable to resolve everything. This notwithstanding, the transformation that [President Carlos] Menem has effected with the help of his cabinet is indeed a feat of great heroism."

In a critical tone of voice, UCR Vice President Melchor Posse said that the fact that Christopher had said that Cavallo was a hero "is the best acknowledgement that the adjustment plan furthered by the Menem administration is tailor-made for U.S. interests."

Posse noted: "This adjustment policy has plunged the Argentines into hunger and unemployment, whereas in the United States, thousands of new jobs have been created, so no wonder Cavallo is dubbed a hero!" [passage omitted]

Commenting on the remarks made by the head of the U.S. diplomacy, UCR Shadow Foreign Minister Carlos Perez Llana pointed out that Christopher's remarks brought to mind "other U.S. officials' remarks terming [Lieutenant General] Leopoldo Galtieri [chief executive under military junta in 1981 who ordered invasion of the Falklands Islands] a "stately general."

Argentina: Christopher's 'Pat on the Back' Welcomed

PY0303231096 Buenos Aires LA NACION in Spanish 2 Mar 96 p 6

[Editorial: "Christopher's Visit"]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to Buenos Aires, as part of a tour of

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Latin American countries, has abounded in good signs, which is a fact that cannot be ignored in a climate surrounded by uncertainties and innuendos.

First, the tone used by the visitor in his public remarks clearly shows that U.S. and Argentine relations are at one of its highest points in history, particularly with respect to common views and trends in the predominant circles that influence political decisions here and there.

A good part of Argentina's political leadership is culturally formed in traditions that are reluctant to close cooperation with the big brothers — a position that often pushed our country to ruinous isolation — and we must still perceive these relations as a novelty despite the euphoric expressions used by the Carlos Menem administration to announce it. We hope now that the new situation will place Argentina in a more convenient and rational position in the world.

Ignoring the protocol, Christopher spoke in terms that are almost hyperbolical about Argentina's economic policies, the government, and the Argentine people as a whole, giving them a heroic character, an exaggeration revealing — or confirming — that Washington approves the path adopted by our country (not only in the economic area, but also because of our participation in international peace missions), wishing us success, which implies an anticipated pat on the back for our objectives, among them, the integration of the Southern Cone into a market with capacity to influence world trade.

It also shows that the U.S. Government has a clear notion that beyond our misunderstanding and differences in criteria — the most notorious one involving the issue of medicinal patents — the general orientation of Argentina's economic policies and international positions coincide with U.S. expectations.

The concrete thing is Christopher's announcement that as soon as our country can produce passports offering the highest guarantees against forgeries — perhaps by the end of the year — the visa requirement to travel between both countries will disappear, which will be of undoubted benefit and comfort to travelers while affording Argentina a situation of exceptional consideration between Latin American nations.

Argentina: Bishops Criticize Christopher's Cavallo Remarks

PY0303235996 Buenos Aires LA NACION in Spanish 2 Mar 96 p 10

[FBIS Translated Text] (DYN) — Former President Raul Alfonsin, Moron bishop Justo Laguna, and Viedma bishop emeritus Miguel Hesayne have criticized U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's characterization of Argentine Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo as "a hero."

Laguna stated that the social price paid to have a "hero like Cavallo is very high," and Hesayne described Cavallo as the "hero of unemployment and hunger."

These critical remarks were uttered in response to Christopher's contention that Cavallo "is regarded as a hero in the United States for promoting, with President Menem, the Argentine economy and for transforming this country."

Laguna said that Cavallo's characterization as a hero "stemmed from remarks by a government to which we are subordinated. Remarkable achievements have no doubt been noted in terms of the reorganization of the economy, but at what price."

Hesayne stated firmly that some regard "Cavallo as a hero resembling those who were responsible for the military dictatorship. In Cavallo's case, however, there have been neither kidnappings nor acts of torture: He has been a hero in fomenting unemployment, hunger, and poor health. The gospels say that heroes are those who feed the hungry, who dress the naked, and give work to the unemployed."

The Viedma bishop said that "for brutal liberal capitalism, heroes are those making profit at the expense of the poverty of most people."

The government's response came right away, but from a low-ranking official so as not to attach great significance to the criticism of the bishops.

Aldo Carreras, secretary for population and community relations at the Interior Ministry, stated that the "Menem administration has worked hard to heal the wounds" provoked by the military regime.

Responding to Hesayne, Carreras stated that the plan implemented by President Menem "has defeated the scourge of inflation, which was violating human rights."

Argentina: Cuban Events Overshadow Christopher Visit

PY0403010596 Buenos Aires LA NACION in Spanish 3 Mar 96 p 10

[From the "International Week" column by Julio Crespo]

[FBIS Translated Text] It would have been reasonable to expect Warren Christopher's trip to be the most important event of the week for U.S. relations with Latin America. Other episodes, however, commanded more attention.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Tensions between Washington and the Fidel Castro regime started increasing at the time the U.S. secretary of state traveled from capital to capital, shaking hands and supporting policies. Then, just before the end of the week, it was announced that the United States was withdrawing Colombia's certification as a country that cooperated in the fight on drug trafficking and almost at the same time, it was confirmed that various members of President Bill Clinton's Latin American policy team were leaving their posts.

Cuba's downing of two civilian planes belonging to the group Brothers to the Rescue on 24 February reestablished, all of a sudden, the tension existing in the past between Washington and Havana. The incident follows a period of a few months of relative relaxation of tensions during which Castro seemed to tolerate the activities of dissident groups.

Those groups had suffered a serious setback days before with the arrest of more than 50 of their members grouped in the so-called "Cuba's Council." With this act Castro walked away from all appearances of an ideological opening, with an attitude that was closer to the Chinese model of relative economic liberalization, but strong political control.

It was precisely after a trip to China, last December, that Castro criticized the appearance of a social class in Cuba, which according to him, constituted a new challenge to the country's socialism.

But the downing of two planes that were being flown by U.S. citizens was something else. Obviously Castro knew very well that the incident was going to provoke a new crisis with the United States and a stiffening of sanctions against Cuba.

In effect, President Clinton's first step was to ban all charter flights to the island, extend the reach of Radio Marti broadcasting, and establish restrictions to the movement of Cuban diplomats accredited at international organizations based in the United States.

As it was to be expected, Congress added to these measures and Clinton had to approve provisions hardening the economic embargo against Cuba even more.

Another disposition that might have alarming consequences denies the granting of visas to anyone, who individually or as part of a company, had purchased property confiscated by the Castro regime from U.S. citizens.

Canada and the European allies of the United States criticized this measure, which even Clinton had been ready to reject in the past. But the situation created last week did not give Clinton much room to maneuver in order to resist the pressures exerted by right- wing legislators and Cuban exiles and he was forced to adopt a position of maximum harshness.

Election Year

Clinton faces a double danger in the handling of the incipient crisis in a year where his reelection is at stake.

On one hand, there are no guarantees that the legislation that the U.S. Congress is now willing to approve, which is promoted by ultra-conservative Senator Jesse Helms, president of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, will do what 37 years of continuous sanctions against Cuba failed to do.

Besides, the new legislation urges the president to try to obtain, through the UN Security Council, an international embargo against Cuba. There are very few possibilities of achieving this. On the contrary, Clinton's new harsh position separates the United States from countries that maintain economic relations with Cuba even more. These countries see the dispositions on confiscated property as possible source of conflicts.

There is another danger that forces the president to carefully measure the need to answer to the pressures exerted by exiles and the right-wing opposition and take a prudent course.

Clinton knows that the vote of Cubans in Miami is at stake, which is decisive to win an election in Florida, where four years ago he lost by a very narrow margin. But other circumstances might make voters take a different attitude, which is even more dangerous.

If the economic sanctions increase Cuba's annoyance, Castro might let a new wave of refugees leave the island, which would put the Clinton administration in a difficult situation with the alternative of returning them to the island, contradicting the feeling of the exiles, or permitting their entry into the United States, which would unleash a wave of protest against it.

The demonstration in Caribbean waters carried out by Cuban exiles in homage to the dead pilots yesterday was a new test for Washington and Havana and both capitals opted for moderation. The White House provided support for the demonstration, but warning demonstrators that they should not violate Cuban air space or territorial waters. Castro, in turn, announced that his country would not tolerate violations to its sovereignty, but stressing that it would act with caution.

Change of Guard

Washington was articulating an answer to Cuba when the news leaked — it was later confirmed — that there was a change among those in charge of carrying out

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Clinton's policies toward Latin America and that four of the most important presidential advisers on Latin American issues were leaving their posts.

Alexander Watson, under secretary of state for inter-American affairs, announced that he will leave his post at the end of the month; Morton Halperin, who had been criticized by Cuban exiles for promoting a lifting of the embargo against Castro, will leave his post at the National Security Council; Michael Skol has just retired as assistant secretary for inter-American affairs; and Richard Feinberg, director of inter-American affairs at the National Security Council, also announced that he too was leaving his post.

No explanation was given for these separations. It was only said that each one has expressed the desire to work in the private field or dedicate time to academic activities. All that might be true, but these changes usually occur at the end of an administration and not at the beginning of an electoral campaign.

These movements coincide with a significant change in some of Washington's Latin American policy priorities.

The tequila effect, first, and a new protectionist outburst, set aside the prospect for broadening NAFTA with the incorporation of other countries. Chile, which would have been the first one to join NAFTA, will have to wait for another occasion.

Drug trafficking, however, has become a matter of the utmost importance. The sanction announced against Colombia at the end of the week as a consequence of the withdrawal of the certification as a country that cooperated in the fight on drug trafficking, is a clear reaction to the reports that President Ernesto Samper's campaign was financed with drug traffickers' money.

Fidel Castro is once again forcing the hand of politicians in an electoral year for they must seek a balance between a firm condemnation of his regime and prudent measures to force him out.

Argentina: Disagreement on Christopher Praise of Cavallo

PY0403005496 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2212 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Anillaco, La Rioja, 3 Mar (TELAM) — President Carlos Menem denied today that the term "hero" used by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to describe Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo was unfortunate, as some leaders of the opposition noted.

In challenging the criticism leveled by some political leaders and bishops against Christopher's remarks, the head of state said: "Perhaps what the U.S. secretary of state intended to say was that Cavallo is a terrific minister. The expression has been misused, but it is not unfortunate."

To that effect, Menem pointed out that "to claim that the economy minister is a hero just because he is at the beck and call of the United States is the stupidest thing I have heard of lately."

The president added: "I have said time and again that Cavallo is the best economy minister Argentina has ever had under democratic governments, and that the economic team that works with the minister is undoubtedly exceptional, too."

Menem noted that he had read in today's newspaper remarks made by former Economy Minister Roberto Alemann, "voicing a similar opinion to the one I am airing and nobody can doubt or question the caliber and talent of a man who is a leading figure in the field of economics like Alemann." [passage omitted]

Menem asserted that "there is no doubt whatsoever that Cavallo's economic and financial management is absolutely positive for Argentina. Besides, this is what matters for investors, businessmen, and politicians from other parts of the world."

The chief executive deemed that Cavallo "must be really easygoing in order to be able to put up with all these attacks." [passage omitted]

Argentina: Communique on Joint Oil Commission With UK

PY0203034296 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2122 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Buenos Aires, 1 Mar (TELAM) — According to a joint communique issued this afternoon, Argentina and the United Kingdom have established a Commission for Hydrocarbons in the South Atlantic and have reviewed the bases for bids on the special cooperation area.

The commission was officially established during meetings that the delegations from the two countries held yesterday and today at the Mining Secretariat's offices. The meetings were presided over by Guillermo Gonzalez, Argentine foreign policy under secretary, and William Marsden, UK foreign policy under secretary.

The meetings were held in compliance with the Joint Declaration signed on 27 September in New York by Argentine Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella and William Marsden, UK secretary of state for foreign and Commonwealth affairs.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

The communique stresses that the two delegations emphasized their goal of promoting "hydrocarbons exploration and exploitation in the southwest Atlantic areas whose sovereignty and jurisdiction are under dispute."

The communique adds that, with this goal, the commission will promote "cooperation between industries from the two sides, including the establishment of joint-ventures [preceding hyphenated term in English] and the drawing up of joint projects for exploration, production, and use of infrastructure."

The communique points out that the delegations "also reviewed measures to protect the environment" in that region and exchanged information and ideas on the directives issued by the respective governments on this issue.

The delegations also "concurred on the necessity of discussing a number of practical issues involving bid calls for the special cooperation area."

In this regard, the communique indicates that "the two sides believe headway has been achieved in this direction."

Foreign Ministry sources indicated that the talks were initially scheduled to end yesterday, but the variety and significance of the issues and the possibility of making headway on the agreement encouraged the negotiators to extend their meetings until noon on 1 March.

During this first encounter, it was agreed to establish a subcommittee, with experts from the two countries, to give advice to the commission on technical aspects of hydrocarbon activities in the special cooperation area. The subcommittee will meet for the first time in London in April or May.

The commission also agreed to meet in each country, taking turns, at least twice a year. The commission's next meeting was scheduled for the second half of this year.

Bolivia

Bolivia: Development Minister on U.S. Certification

PY0203033096 La Paz Radio Cadena Nacional Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Bolivia has received the U.S. drug enforcement certification, but now requires more oxygen to domestically implement its drug enforcement policy.

This stance was supported by Sustainable Development Minister Moises Jarmusz, who noted that our country has been in trouble during the period in which the unforgivable ultimatum was in effect. The ultimatum forced Bolivia to eradicate 5,400 hectares of coca crops by December 1995 and sign an extradition treaty in late June. Noncompliance would have caused economic sanctions.

On 1 March Bolivia received full certification. In Jarmusz's opinion, however, more oxygen is still required.

[Begin Jarmusz recording] It is my personal opinion, and in no way the government's opinion. I believe it would be interesting and it would be necessary to review this possibility. Yesterday I was reading an article on why the United States was not certifying us.

In a nutshell, I believe it is necessary to review various issues. I believe countries like Bolivia should ask for a little more oxygen. If we are able to discuss multilateral issues in the United Nations, this is important.... [end recording]

Jarmusz did not rule out the possibility of raising this idea, which was voiced abroad, during the sustainable development summit so that the certification will be approved by a multilateral organization in an equitable manner in which consumers, producers, and transit countries do not act the fool.

Brazil

Brazil: Lampreia, Christopher Sign Nuclear, Space Accords

PY0203011896 Brasilia Voz do Brasil Network in Portuguese 2200 GMT 1 Mar 96

[Report by Poliane Castelo Branco]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who arrived in Brazil today, announced that Brazil will be able to join the group of countries that can supply nuclear technology.

Christopher, who is making a three-day official visit to Brazil, attended the signing of two agreements between Brazil and the United States held today at Itamaraty Palace. One agreement deals with space cooperation, which envisages joint undertakings by NASA and the Brazilian Space Agency, AEB. The other agreement deals with cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Brazilian Foreign Minister Luiz Felipe Lampreia said Brazil is committed to struggling to ban both nuclear tests and the proliferation of nuclear weapons:

[Begin recording] I want to state that Brazil is fully committed to the cause of nonproliferation and it has assumed both highly specific legal and political commitments to this effect. [end recording]

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Christopher praised the Senate approval of the patent bill. In his opinion, this is a modern bill that will be instrumental in attracting new investments to Brazil.

Brazil: Joint Space Exploration Pact With U.S. Detailed

PY0203013896 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2300 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] NASA will send the first Brazilian astronaut into space. The U.S. secretary of state today signed in Brasilia an agreement for the joint exploration of space.

Have you ever imagined a Brazilian inside the U.S. space shuttle? Or the NASA and the Brazilian Space Agency jointly launching a rocket from the Alcantara Base in Maranhao?

During the visit of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Brazil and the United States today signed an agreement for the peaceful use of space [as heard], whereby Brazil will become associated with the country having made the most progress in this field.

The agreement foresees the exchange of students and scientists, the use of space installations by the two countries, and the joint use of the U.S. space shuttle. Today, the Brazilian Space Agency director received the concurrence of the NASA director to the presence of Brazilian astronauts on board the shuttle.

Besides this, Brazil will launch from the Alcantara Base the first satellites in the world that will circle the Equator. One of them will be able to observe the destruction of the environment, the status of agricultural harvests, and the location of minerals in all the countries in the Equatorial region. The other satellite will be for communications. It will make cellular telephone services possible throughout the country, including the interior and the Amazon forest area.

Brazil: Christopher, Lampreia on Ecuador-Peru Talks

PY0203023196 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2216 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Brasilia, 1 Mar (EFE) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Brazilian Foreign Minister Luiz Felipe Lampreia today analyzed in Brasilia the peace process between Ecuador and Peru and the possibility of creating mechanisms to consolidate it.

Christopher asserted that the United States is willing to grant whatever help is requested of it to consolidate the peace process, and he praised the role of Brazil as coordinator of the group of guarantor countries of the Rio de Janeiro Protocol, comprised also of Argentina and Chile [in addition to the United States and Brazil].

In turn, Lampreia stressed that the governments of the United States and Brazil are convinced that they played a preponderant role in the ending of the undeclared war between Ecuador and Peru and in making the two countries establish a direct dialogue.

Lampreia pointed out that Brazil, which hosted the talks that ended the war, will now host the talks on the subjects that motivated the war.

Sebastiao do Rego Barros, Brazilian Foreign Ministry secretary general, confirmed to EFE that the dialogue will be resumed in Brasilia next week, probably on 6 March.

Do Rego Barros said that, in his opinion, the latest tensions between the two governments will not affect the beginning of the conversations in Brasilia.

In turn, Alexander Watson, assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, said in Brasilia that the guarantor countries will make public the list of the so-called "subsistent" impasses presented by Ecuador and Peru.

In statements to EFE, Watson insisted that at this moment it is essential to maintain and deepen mutual trust and definitively remove the danger of a new physical confrontation.

Christopher and Watson are in Brazil on an official three-day visit that will also include Sao Paulo and Manaus.

The vice foreign ministers of Ecuador, Marcelo Fernandez, and of Peru, Jorge Voto Bernales, will attend the meeting that will take place in Brasilia next week.

Fernandez and Voto Bernales will continue the dialogue begun in Lima and Quito, which established the basis for negotiations over the essence of their differences.

The meeting will take place at a moment when new disagreements have surfaced because of a Peruvian charge — denied by Ecuador — that Ecuadoran troops allegedly occupied an area in the demilitarized zone.

Brazil: Cardoso, Christopher Discuss Patent Bill

PY0203014896 Sao Paulo SBT Television Network in Portuguese 2230 GMT 1 Mar 96

[Report carried during the "TJ Brazil" newscast hosted by anchorman Boris Casoy]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher praised the approval of the patent bill and said that Brazil and the United States are the two largest

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

democracies in today's world. Reporter Juliana Morrone has more from Brasilia:

[Begin recording] [Morrone] Brazil and the United States walk together both in space and on earth. This is what has brought the U.S. secretary of state to Itamaraty [Brazilian Foreign Ministry]. Warren Christopher and Brazilian Foreign Minister Luiz Felipe Lampreia signed two agreements: One is designed to make use of U.S. and Brazilian rockets and satellites in scientific projects and research, and the other agreement envisages the use of nuclear energy in medicine, agriculture, and industry and prohibits the development of a bomb, explosive, or any military project.

Christopher has a great many words of praise to say during his visit. He said that Brazil and the United States are the two largest democracies in today's world. He also praised yesterday's approval by the Brazilian Senate of the patent bill, which is also expected to be approved by the Chamber of Deputies.

The patent bill will put an end to the old U.S. threats of economic retaliation against Brazil.

[Lampreia] We are truly convinced that the Senate decision will contribute in large measure to enabling Brazil to have, quite soon, a patent law that would be fully in keeping with international standards following the commitment Brazil already made before the WTO.

[Morrone] Christopher also congratulated President Fernando Henrique Cardoso over the Senate approval of the patent bill. He said the patent bill enhances the protection accorded to U.S. products and Brazil's chances to attract large investments.

Taking advantage of the favorable atmosphere, Cardoso said Brazil would like to have greater participation in international organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank.

Repeating his line of praising Brazil, Christopher said Brazil carries much weight and merits more participation on the international scene. [end recording]

The Senate gave a fast track treatment to the patent bill so that it could be approved before Christopher's arrival. Look, since the the time of the military regime, Brazil has moved away from the United States. Now, contentious issues are slowly being resolved. Yet, Brazilian-U.S. relations are still not at the best possible level. There is reason to state that ties are very good, but there are still several issues over which the two countries are showing their teeth at each other.

Brazil: Lampeira, Christopher on NPT, Cuban Downing

PY0203033996 Sao Paulo AGENCIA ESTADO in Portuguese 2306 GMT 1 Mar 96

[Report by Aldo Renato Soares]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Brasilia, 1 Mar (AE) — Brazilian Foreign Minister Luiz Felipe Lampreia and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher today signed, at Itamaraty Palace, a "framework" agreement on space cooperation. This agreement will be primarily implemented by the Brazilian Space Agency (AEB) and by NASA, the U.S. space agency. This agreement will pave the way for a Brazilian astronaut to take part in a mission of the U.S. space shuttle. A "freamwork agreement" is just a phrase used to describe a generic agreement establishing a legal format for the development of specific cooperation projects. Strategic Affairs Secretary Ronaldo Sardenberg and U.S. Ambassador Melvyn Levitsky have also signed a cooperation agreement on the peaceful use of nuclear energy. [passage omitted]

The nuclear agreement was already signed, but it is still subject to the settling of some issues to reconcile the laws of the two countries regarding liabilities. The agreement envisages the transfer of information, material, equipment, and nuclear components directly between the two parties or through an authorized third party. Cooperation areas include the development, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and use of reactors and experiments with reactors; the use of muclear materials in physics and biological research, medicine, agriculture, and industry; safeguards and physical protection of nuclear materials, equipment and components, radiological protection, including environmental and security considerations; and the assessment of the role of nuclear energy in national energy plans. [passage omitted]

According to Foreign Minister Lampreia, Christopher told President CArdoso at Planalto Palace that "Brazil carries much weight and that it merits greater participation."

Lampreia said: "The president stated that Brazil would like to have greater participation in international organizations such as the IMF, the WTO, and the World Bank." Cardoso added that Brazil would like to create a channel of communication with the G-7, grouping the seven most developed countries, to convey its ideas. [passage omitted]

Christopher said he hopes the United States and Brazil will sign a more comprehensive agreement in the nuclear area regarding the cessation of nuclear tests. An

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

agreement is now being negotiated in Geneva. Lampreia reaffirmed Brazil's disagreements with the United States regarding the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). Brazil refuses to sign the NPT because it considers it to be discriminatory by establishing different obligations for those countries which do possess nuclear technology and those which do not. [passage omitted]

The Cuban issue was also discussed at Planalto Palace. Cardoso advocated efforts to avoid actions that could increase tensions and conflicts and proposed that investigations into the downing of U.S. civilian planes by Cuba be conducted by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which abides by the Chicago Convention, the world's convention on airspace.

[Madrid EFE in Spanish at 2031 GMT on 1 March, in a related report that touches on the NPT issue, adds: "Lampreia said that since 1968, when the NPT was signed in Geneva, Brazil has been of the opinion that there is an imbalance between the obligations imposed upon countries which possess nuclear technology and those which do not. He noted, however, that 'this does not mean that we will never sign it.'"]

Brazil: Pro-Cuban Students Boo Christopher

PY0303194996 Sao Paulo AGENCIA ESTADO in Portuguese 2104 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sao Paulo, 2 Mar (AE) — Tatiana Otoboni Chaves and Luciano Cordeiro, two leaders from the Municipal Union of Secondary Students (UMES) today circumvented the tight security measures enforced during U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit. Carrying a Cuban flag, they cheered and chanted slogans in favor of Fidel Castro's regime, and booed the United States. Security guards — some 40 in total — were unable to explain how the students managed to obtain credentials to attend a luncheon, which was by invitation only, hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce at the Transamerica Hotel, located in the southern district of Sao Paulo. The students were escorted out of the hotel.

The names of the two UMES leaders were not on the list of guests — some 500 — who had been issued credentials for the luncheon. The Brazilian students wanted to demonstrate against the embargo on trade with Cuba imposed by the United States. Relations between Cuba and the United States deteriorated following the shooting down of two U.S. civilian planes by the Cuban Air Force.

The Brazilian federal policemen and the hired security guards were the first ones to realize what was happening. It took Christopher's 12 bodyguards a few minutes to realize what was happening. Two hours prior to the luncheon, a thorough inspection was made of the dining room and the guests using dogs searching for possible bombs.

Brazil: Christopher Visit Sign of 'Partnership' With U.S.

PY0303235896 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 1 Mar 96 Section One p 1

[Article by Paulo Tarso Flecha de Lima, Brazilian ambassador to the United States: "Christopher Returns to Brazil"]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is to begin a three-day state visit to Brazil on the morning of 1 March. This is not the first time Christopher comes to our country. When he made a tour of Brazil in 1977 in his capacity as assistant secretary of state under Jimmy Carter, he arrived here armed with an agenda that included the issues of human rights and the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

Today, after nearly two decades, the U.S. secretary of state is not coming to discuss human rights. He is very much aware of the fact that the defense of human rights is the cornerstone of the hard-won democracy prevalent in Brazil. Nor is his trip due to our difference of opinion over the issue of nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, which drove Brazil and the United States apart.

On the contrary, the U.S. secretary of state is coming to Brazil to sign momentous agreements with our country on the peaceful use of atomic energy and on aerospace cooperation.

Brazilian credentials in the field of nuclear nonproliferation — which were shown with unequivocal resoluteness in the full enforcement of the Tlatelolco Treaty and in our full participation in the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), just to mention two examples — constitute at present an integral part of our foreign policy. The accords that we are about to sign with the United States evince the degree of appreciation by the international community of Brazilian commitments in that area. In placing the visit of Secretary Christopher in a broader context, I would venture to say that — strictly speaking — the evolution of those two subjects is emblematic of the shift in parameters that characterized relations between Brazil and the United States.

Brazilian diplomacy — following in the trail-blazing footsteps of its mentor, the Baron of Rio Branco — has always understood that candid and harmonious relations with the United States constitute one of the central pillars of its foreign policy.

This notwithstanding, during the Cold War, the general characteristics of an international system marked by

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

bipolar confrontation imposed structural limits to those relations. Those limits originated in Brazil's interest in distancing itself from a system that concentrated power and paid no heed to the interests of a country which had its own independent ideas about a new world order. The perspectives fashioned by modern times have eliminated those limitations and have opened new horizons for Brazil's policy on relations with the United States. Against the backdrop of those structural disparities, there was not much common ground in the past between us. Today, however, there has been a complete turnaround and while economic or political differences have not yet disappeared, both countries' structures have now converged.

This new model of bilateral dialogue made its debut in April 1995 on the occasion of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso's state visit to the United States. Our president's central message was clearly understood in Washington — Brazil had already concluded a decisive part of its structural reform program without any traumas or costs for the international community.

The consolidation of democracy, the economic takeoff with stability, the commitment to fight for the social cause were clear examples of the values upheld by the Brazilian nation. It was time we established a new partnership between Brazil and the United States built on those foundations.

It is in the light of this new partnership that we should try to understand the recent historical development of bilateral relations, characterized by the enhanced level of political dialogue and the fluidity in mutual understanding. It is within this broader context of relations between Brazil and the United States that we can best assess the meaning and significance of Christopher's visit to our country.

We are not welcoming the U.S. secretary of state just as a friend, since he is already our partner, a partner in this complex and pressing task of working side by side to build a world in which the values of justice, freedom, and development constitute the pillars of international stability.

Brazil: Christopher's Visit Said Clinton Campaign Move

PY0303222196 Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL in Portuguese 1-3 Mar 96 p A5

[Report by Jorge Luiz de Souza in Buenos Aires, Argentina]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Secretary of State Warren Christopher will be visiting Brazil from 1 to 3 March. Christopher, who is the most important cabinet member of the U.S. Administration, has been in office since President Bill Clinton's inauguration. Christopher, who is making his first visit to Latin America, has time and again visited other areas, especially the Middle East.

According to diplomatic observers, the visit is just designed to convey a goodwill gesture [gesto de apreco] to Latin American countries. This is why Christopher's Latin American tour — which also includes El Salvador, Trinidad and Tobago, Chile, and Argentina — had been maintained despite the crisis ignited on 24 February by the downing of two U.S. planes by Cuba.

Furthermore, three years into Clinton's term and with the November presidential election approaching, Christopher's distancing himself from Latin American countries could be used against Clinton during the electoral campaign. The U.S. President is heavily basing his reelection bid on his foreign policy.

Regarding Latin America, Clinton took the initiative of promoting an ambitions integration proposal by 2005. In this respect, the U.S. President already promoted two meetings of heads of state of the Americas during the past 14 months, both of them in U.S. territory — Miami and Denver. Yet, not only he but his right-hand man on foreign relations needed to visit the region.

Christopher is arriving in Brazil at a time when practically all contentious issues have been eliminated. Even the issue regarding recognition of international patents — which does not fall within the jurisdiction of the State Department but within the office of the U.S. Trade Representative — was coincidentally resolved by the Senate on the eve of Christopher's arrival.

A diplomatic source has told GAZETA that the topic of highest interest for the Brazilian Government in relation to the U.S. Government, that is, the U.S. support for the reform of the UN Charter to create a permanent seat on the UN Security Council for Brazil, will not be on Christopher's agenda. [passage omitted]

Brazil: Former Ambassadors View Cuban Plane Incident

PY0203033796 Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 28 Feb 96 p 2

[From the "Political Issues" column by Dora Kramer]

[FBIS Translated Text] The story of clashes between Cuba and the United States is more than three decades long and it is the only Cold War issue in the world that has survived and is still going on. The episode of the downing of airplanes flown by Cuban pilots on 24 February has an irresistible nostalgic flavor. The first impression caused by the news was that there would

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

be a resurgence of the crisis generated by the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961. This is pure emotion in a world pasteurized by the coldness of globalization.

However, for those knowledgeable regarding the subject, the expectation of an adrenaline-rising conflict is pure fantasy. Such is the opinion of two diplomats equally involved with one or the other party to this incident. Both Italo Zappa, Brazilian ambassador to Cuba for four years, and Roberto Campos, Brazilian ambassador to Washington between 1961 and 1964, agree that the incident does not have a minimal chance of developing into a crisis.

First, this is because neither of the two parties is interested in a crisis; second, there is no other fuel available to feed the spirit of the U.S. politicians than the fact that this is an election year in the United States. The need to give satisfaction to the 1 million-strong Hispanic population of Florida has made President Bill Clinton react to the incident by imposing restrictive measures — even though soft, according to Zappa and Campos — on Cuba.

Had it not been for that, Clinton would have simply issued a declaration of repudiation and continued with the so-called easing of relations between the two countries, which he himself started last year, and which so pleases U.S. businessmen who have a practical view of life. That is why they are rich and developed and we, being so romantic, continue in the same situation as always. But that is another subject.

Roberto Campos pointed out the attention with which U.S. businessmen regard the investments the Europeans are making in Cuba in the area of tourism. They are earning big money, and if the embargo were lifted, the Americans could also drink from the same fountain. Only things are not so simple.

Italo Zappa visualized the situation as a large cruiser ship that has a small hole through which water seeps in, intermittently affecting the perfect performance of the ship.

Well, the United States needs to repair the hole, while Fidel wants to make it bigger. Neither of the two is succeeding completely — although they have reached a good level of coexistence — because each one has his reasons. The United States wants a multiparty system with free elections in exchange for the end of the embargo.

According to Zappa, Fidel Castro does not give in because he knows that he could win the first election with 90 percent of the votes, in all probability, but not any further elections, since, once the regime opens, the Americans would really pour in money to take power via elections. Zappa recalls that Daniel Ortega thought he could endlessly win elections in Nicaragua and he did not succeed. Fidel knows that the same would happen to him.

Therefore, in Ambassador Zappa's view, all the United States can do is wait for Fidel to die. The absence of the leader as consequence of either death, toppling, or demoralization is, according to Roberto Campos, only one of the theories considered in the United States. According to this theory, Fidel has terminal cancer that, from the American point of view, could facilitate everything for everyone.

Another manner of removing him from the scene — given that no one ignores Castro's emotional influence on the Cuban people — would be by increasingly hardening the economic restrictions until the regime is killed by asphyxiation. Well, if Castro has not been killed in 36 years, with all the power at the disposal of the United States, right there at a slight distance of 150 km across the sea....

The second theory, Campos says, is that it is necessary to create "islands of capitalism" inside Cuba so that once the people have a taste of a free economy, they will also be inoculated with the virus of political liberties.

From that point, it would take but one step to a popular uprising. Nowadays, two kinds of Cubans live in the island, Roberto Campos says. "Those who carry out transactions in dollars because they work with tourism, and the immense majority of people who lack the comforts that are accessible to the others.

What does all this have to do with the downing of two airplanes by Cuba? In theory, nothing, but it allows one to think about a problem that has lasted for decades without a solution and that also causes a setback in the bilateral talks which were going so well.

At the most, it will be like the ambassadors say: The crisis will end once the new president of the United States is elected, when no more satisfaction must be given to the Hispanics from the Florida electoral college.

As for the case itself, which is about to be forgotten, Zappa thinks that the pilots exaggerated and that Cuba had no other way out than to down the airplanes under penalty of the total demoralization of Fidel Castro by two small airplanes with exiles overflying Havana to throw pamphlets against his regime.

Campos sees nothing wrong with two crazy individuals overflying the island to throw pamphlets announcing the end of the Castro regime. He considers the downing of the airplanes an unnecessary demonstration of force. "If they detected the airplanes, they could have very well escorted them down to arrest the pilots," Campos concluded.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Brazil: Suplicy Bill Backs Elections for Alternates

96SM0119A Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL in Portuguese 19-21 Feb 96 p A5

[Article by Cesar Felicio: "Power of the Voteless Senators"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Brasilia—Although they are archadversaries on the controversial question of the patent law, PMDB [Brazilian Democratic Movement Party] Senators Ney Suassuna (Paraiba) and Fernando Bezerra (Rio Grande do Norte) have two things in common besides their membership in the same party and the fact that they are both from the northeast: they are both prominent businessmen, and they both obtained their seats in the Senate without receiving a single popular vote. Suassuna is a heavyweight in the Rio de Janeiro real estate market who benefited from the late Senator Antonio Mariz' election as governor of Paraiba in 1994. Bezerra, who is president of the National Confederation of Industry (CNI), became a representative of his state when the incumbent senator, Garibaldi Alves, was elected governor.

Big businessmen who use the position of alternate senator as a gateway to political activity are not a rarity in Congress. Within the PMDB itself, the central figure in the biggest political crisis to strike Fernando Henrique's administration—the Sivam [Amazon Region Surveillance System] case—was also an alternate: Senator Gilberto Miranda (Amazonas), who is a partner of several multinationals in the Manaus Free Zone. He entered the Senate when the incumbent, Amazonino Mendes, was elected mayor of Manaus less than two years after becoming a senator.

In the PSDB [Brazilian Social Democracy Party], the example comes from Sao Paulo. The current minister of planning, Jose Serra, gave up his seat (which he had not occupied a single day) to Pedro Piva, a businessman in the paper and cellulose industry. Neither Piva, Bezerra, Miranda, nor Suassuna had ever held any elective post before becoming an alternate.

This year, at least one businessman may reach the Senate if the incumbent is a candidate in the municipal elections. He is Lincoln Pereira da Cunha, president of the Sao Paulo Commercial Association and alternate for Senator Romeu Tuma (PSL [Brazilian Social Party], Sao Paulo), who is being considered for mayor of Sao Paulo.

The partnership between senators and businessmen is acknowledged by some congressmen as being beneficial for both sides. Senator Ney Suassuna (Paraiba) calmly admits that he provided financial support for Mariz' campaigns for the Senate in 1990 and for governor in 1994. "There was an agreement that I would have a seat in the Senate," Suassuna says. He denies only that he is a dilettante in politics, invoking as proof the weight of his genealogical tree in the history of Paraiba. The senator's family goes back to the conquistador Jeronimo de Albuquerque, who drove the French from Maranhao in 1618 and was the ancestor of several Paraiba nobles and governors.

Among the incumbents, Senator Jonas Pinheiro (PFL [Liberal Front Party], Mato Grosso) is already saying that he will give his seat to businessman Blairo Maggi in 1998. Maggi has investments in soybeans, livestock, poultry raising, and river transportation. "He will be part of a new generation of politicians," says Pinheiro, adding that there was "discreet participation" by the businessman in financing his election campaign.

Luis Oswaldo Pastore, a Sao Paulo-based businessman who is the alternate for Senator Gerson Camata (PMDB, Espirito Santo), also has a good chance of reaching the Senate. Although Camata will not confirm it, the government leader in the Senate, Elcio Alvares (PFL, Espirito Santo), says that his colleague in the Espirito Santo bloc may run as the candidate of a big alliance in that state's gubernatorial election in 1998. Pastore is involved in stockraising and the growing of black pepper and coffee.

Alvares himself, who does not intend to run in 1998, also has a big businessman as his alternate: Jonice Tristao, who operates in the field of foreign trade. "He is a longtime friend. I agreed to be a candidate only if he would be my alternate," the senator says. Other alternates are Clesio Andrade, president of the National Confederation of Transportation (for Senator Francelino Pereira, PFL, Minas Gerais); Luis Girao, a businessman in the dairy products industry (for Senator Lucio Alcantara, PSDB, Ceara); and Ulisses Riedel, a well-to-do labor lawyer (for Senator Lauro Campos, PT [Workers Party], Federal District).

It would be wrong, however, to generalize regarding the situation. In some cases the position of alternate is occupied by relatives of the senators. The alternate for Antonio Carlos Magalhaes of Bahia (PFL) is his son, Antonio Carlos Magalhaes, Jr., a professor of administration in Salvador. And the PMDB leader in the Senate, Jader Barbalho (Para), chose his father, Laercio Barbalho, a former state deputy, to be his alternate. Senator Iris Rezende (PMDB, Goias) chose a brother, Otoniel Machado Carneiro, who was secretary of government when Iris headed that state's administration. He is one of the best known stockraisers in that state.

The big exception to the rule in the Senate is Senator Joao Franca (PMDB, Roraima), who since 1991 has discreetly occupied the seat left vacant by Helio Campos, who died two months after being elected. The slender Joao Franca, one of the many migrants from the northeast to try to make a living in the Amazon Region during the 1970's, has done a little of everything in his life: he

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

has been a farmworker, band musician, tailor, and construction foreman. "I was very good as a tailor; I made all kinds of clothes—for men and for women," says the senator with no trace of modesty. He entered politics as a ward boss in Jose Sarney's campaigns for deputy and those of Campos himself.

Alternates in the Senate

Senator in office	Alternate	Alternate's Activity
Romeu Tuma (PSL, Sao Paulo)	Lincoln da Cunha Pereira	Commercial leader
Elcio Alvares (PFL, Espirito Santo)	Jonice Tristao	Foreign trade
Gerson Camata (PMDB, Espirito Santo)	Luis Oswaldo Pastore	Stockraising
Jonas Pinheiro (PFL, Mato Grosso)	Blairo Maggi	Stockraising, transportation
Lucio Alcantara (PSDB, Ceara)	Luis Girao	Food industry
Francelino Pereira (PFL, Minas Gerais)	Clesio Andrade	Transportation
Ronaldo Cunha Lima (PMDB, Paraiba)	Jose Carlos da Silva, Jr.	Communications
Lauro de Campos (PT, Federal District)	Ulisses Riedel	Labor lawyer

Alternates in Question

Brasilia—The institution of alternates is being questioned within the Senate itself. Already approved by the Committee on Constitution and Justice (CCJ) in the Chamber of Deputies is a bill by Senator Eduardo Suplicy (PT, Sao Paulo) that would establish direct elections for alternates in the Senate. Suplicy himself admits that his proposal can be improved and that it serves to stimulate debate on the subject.

"There have been times when, of the 81 senators in office, 21 were alternates. It is not fair for an elective post to be filled by someone who in many cases is completely unknown to the state's population," he says. According to Suplicy, negotiations coordinated by the PSDB leader in the Senate, Sergio Machado (Ceara), are under way to have direct election replaced by an arrangement requiring that a new election for the Senate be held whenever a senator is unable to occupy his seat for more than two years. Machado is chairman of the Senate's Committee on Election Reform.

Despite Suplicy's optimism, the rapporteur for the matter on the CCJ, Jefferson Peres (PSDB, Amazonas) is already showing impatience with the slow progress of the work by Machado's committee and is going to call for the bill's return to the original committee so that it can follow the normal procedure.

Brazil: PMDB's Loss of Political Power Viewed

96SM0119B Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL in Portuguese 19-21 Feb 96 pp A1, A6

[Article by Maria Cristina Fernandes: "PMDB's Star Is Fading"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sao Paulo—The PMDB [Brazilian Democratic Movement Party] will be 30 years old this coming 24 March. Brazil's oldest political party is unrecognizable. It is still big (it alternates with the PFL [Liberal Front Party] in being the largest bloc in the National Congress) and powerful (it holds three ministries) just as it has been in every administration since 1985. But it no longer attracts the same voters.

At the peak of its electoral success in the 1970's, when it was still the MDB [Brazilian Democratic Movement], the party received 70 percent of its votes in the big cities in Brazil's south and southeast regions, and its typical voter was a middle-class member of the liberal professions. Today the PMDB is approaching the runup to the 1996 municipal elections with a real chance of electing mayors in a few capitals of the northeast and center-west, its voters being concentrated mainly in social classes C and D, with only a minority (seven percent) having attended a university.

Corruption is the second principal image that voters associate with the party (the first is that of its leaders). The top party leader most remembered by the voters is dead (Ulysses Guimaraes). Former President Jose Sarney and former Governor Orestes Quercia are remembered respectively by only 1.6 percent and one percent of the voters.

The PMDB was made aware of the profile of its voters back in December, when it received from the Gallup Institute the results of a survey it had commissioned on voter attitudes toward the political parties (see the tables below). But not until now, on the eve of the municipal conventions at which it will choose its candidates in the October election, is the party beginning to size up its electoral difficulties.

"We know that our trend has been one of declining political power," admits Deputy Jose Aristodemo Pinotti

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

(PMDB, Sao Paulo), president of the Pedroso Hurta Foundation, a kind of party institute for political studies. "The PMDB's electoral difficulties in the urban centers are not something new," says political scientist Jairo Nicolau of the Rio de Janeiro University Research Institute (Iuperj).

Qualities and Shortcomings*

Quality or shortcoming	PMDB	PT**	PSDB	PFL
Struggle for the poor	6.0	23.7	5.5	5.3
Competent leaders	8.4	0.5	2.8	2.0
Corruption among leaders	13.8	1.0	6.6	10.2
Demagogic leaders	11.2	7.9	14.5	12.2

* According to the voters (percentages).

** [Workers Party].

Source: Gallup.

Of those four, only Cambraia and Fonseca are still in the PMDB, and the former is the party's only mayor of a capital who has any real chance of choosing his successor. In Recife, Jarbas Vasconcelos, who the opinion polls say is the most popular mayor in all the capitals, is expected to support a PFL candidate, Deputy Roberto Magalhaes, now recovering from a heart attack.

But it is in Rio de Janeiro that the picture is most emblematic of the PMDB's entire problem with succession. With Cesar Maia having just returned to the PFL, the PMDB's most outstanding mayoral hopeful is Albano Reis, a grocery chain owner who gained fame by distributing food at Christmas time in Quintino, a suburb in Rio de Janeiro's northern zone.

Having only two mayors to find successors for is a numerical problem for the PMDB. In this election more than in the three preceding ones, the voter is going to want to hear about his own city. "For mayors who conducted a good administration, it will be easier than before to choose a successor," says Marcos Coimbra, director of the Vox Populi polling institute.

Best-Remembered Leaders (percentages)

Party	Leader	Percentage
PT	Lula	17.0
PMDB	Ulysses	4.9
PMDB	Sarney	1.6
PMDB	Quercia	1.0
PFL	Antonio Carlos Magalhaes	1.9
PSDB	Fernando Henrique Cardoso	8.9

Source: Gallup.

Coimbra claims that the election in October will be centered on local issues. "This may be the first municipal election since the political relaxation not to be dominated by an economic or political crisis. That will help increase the importance of local themes in the campaigns," says Coimbra, recalling the annual inflation rate of 235 percent that dominated the 1985 elections at the start of the Sarney administration; the Volta Redonda massacre (the Army's invasion of the Volta Redonda steel mill, in which workers were killed and which created a climate of nationwide agitation during the 1988 elections); and the impeachment in 1992, which was approved 72 hours before the election was held.

According to that reasoning, the real will not be a campaign issue unless it collapses between now and October, a possibility contradicted by the predictions of the most pessimistic economic analysts. "Defense of the real is an issue from the last election, but attacking the Real Plan is not going to get anyone elected," Coimbra says.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Profile of Supporters (percentages)

Profile	PT	PMDB	PSDB	PFL	PDT*	PTB**	PPB***
Social class:							
A	5	5	16	7	3	5	9
B	18	14	28	11	10	7	24
C	34	33	29	35	44	30	33
D	43	48	27	47	43	58	34
Region:							
Southeast	13	18	7	7	31	15	25
South	55	40	64	29	52	55	51
Northeast	19	29	20	49	12	21	15
Center West/ North	13	15	9	15	5	9	9
Level of education:							
Higher	12	7	23	8	7	5	13
Secondary	63	55	58	46	53	53	48
Primary	25	38	21	46	40	42	39

* [Democratic Labor Party].

** [Brazilian Labor Party].

*** [Brazilian People's Party].

Source: Gallup

Physician Juraci Magalhaes, whose highly favored election bid in Fortaleza is very dear to the PMDB's heart, is taking no chances. With the name of his PSDB [Brazilian Social Democracy Party] opponent not yet decided, Juraci Magalhaes does not intend to quarrel over the real on the home ground of one of the PSDB's most popular governors, Tasso Jereissati. "I do not deny that we are paying a high price for stability, but that is no reason to close one's eyes to its merits," says Juraci, who once governed Fortaleza as Ciro Gomes' deputy when the latter resigned as the city's mayor to run for governor of Ceara in 1990. Juraci then got his chosen successor, the current mayor, elected.

Support and Rejection (percentages)

Party	Support	Rejection
PT	17.3 (16.4 million)	25.8
PMDB	16.6 (15.2 million)	11.9
PSDB	7.0 (6.7 million)	7.0
PFL	6.0 (5.7 million)	11.3
PDT	4.2 (4.0 million)	8.4
PTB	4.4 (4.2 million)	5.4
PPB	2.5 (2.4 million)	7.1

Source: Gallup.

With the question of the real and the economic reforms being monopolized by the national administration's two principal parties—the PSDB and the PFL—and with

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

very few municipal administrations able, like that in Fortaleza, to serve as a showcase for the voters, the PMDB is still looking for an election slogan.

"We do not even have a strong national leadership to use as a reference," says Federal Deputy Joao Thome Mestrinho (Amazonas), whose father, former Governor Gilberto Mestrinho, is the PMDB's nominee for mayor of Manaus. "We miss Ulysses [Guimaraes] not because of his electoral weight, which the 1989 election showed that he did not have, but because of his standing, which was capable of unifying the party's campaigns."

Having withdrawn to Sao Paulo in disappointment over the split in his party and his rejection by important segments of the party, former Governor Orestes Quercia is not going to campaign outside the borders of Sao Paulo State. "I am going to concentrate on Sao Paulo. Beginning in March and continuing until June, we will hold party meetings every Saturday in 12 different regions of the state," former Governor Quercia says. With a strategy for winning back the party in Sao Paulo, Quercia is not flatly ruling out the possibility of running for state governor in 1998. "A lot of people have been visiting me, and everyone wants me to be a candidate, but no definite decision has been reached," he says.

If it were up to the former governor of Sao Paulo, the PMDB would adopt an opposition stance in these elections, but Quercia himself cannot convince even his party's possible candidates for mayor of Sao Paulo. "If the candidate is Goldman (Alberto Goldman, a federal deputy), the stance will be one of support for the administration," Quercia admits.

In some capitals where the PMDB has no chance of winning, the party may support not only the administration but also its candidate. That is the case, for example, in Porto Alegre, where there is growing pressure for Governor Antonio Britto to support the candidacy of Deputy Yeda Crusius of the PSDB; in Belo Horizonte, where support may go to the candidate chosen by Governor Eduardo Azeredo; and in Sao Luis, where the party wants to support the candidate selected by Governor Roseana Sarney.

If it follows the recommendations made by Gallup director Carlos Matheus, the PMDB will support the fight against inflation but show itself to be "indignant over social exclusion," in order to remain in good standing with its voters in classes C and D and hang on to its cabinet posts. And then pray for votes.

Brazil: FHC Establishes Special Advisory Group

96SM0119C Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 26 Feb 96

[Article by Dora Kramer: "Plan for Use at Any Time" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Fernando Henrique Cardoso is discreetly encouraging the work of a special task force concerned with a set of Brazilian problems. This may be useful to him not only in this administration but especially if he heads the next one. These include further developments in constitutional reform, the modernization of public administration, and initiatives that will lead the country beyond the changes being debated today. Meeting by decree two months ago, businessmen, lawyers, and politicians—none of them connected with the current administration—are looking for long-term alternative solutions for reforming the state and medium-term solutions for reforming the state apparatus.

That distinction was made by Minister of Administration Bresser Pereira in December when he installed the Council on State Reform, which consists of 12 experts from outside the administration. At that same meeting, the minister made only one recommendation: neither of those two types of state reform should include economic policy. Bresser does not want problems, so that subject is flatly prohibited.

Everyone agreed on the agenda. The result is that a different set of concerns will be brought to Brasilia tomorrow for the first meeting since the one at which the council was installed. Those presenting these concerns will be former Pernambuco Governor Joaquim Francisco, now back from his stint with the Inter-American Development Bank; Rio Grande do Sul businessman Luiz Carlos Mandelli; sociologists Sergio Abranches and Helio Jaguaribe; attorney Joao Geraldo Piquet Carneiro; and Sao Paulo businessmen Antonio Ermirio de Moraes, Gerald Reiss, and Helio Mattar. Other council members are Bolivar Lamounier, director of the IDESP [Sao Paulo Institute of Economic, Social, and Political Studies]; Celina do Amaral Peixoto, director of the Getulio Vargas Foundation; and Antonio dos Santos Maciel Neto, former director of the Department of Industry and Commerce in the Ministry of Finance, a left-wing militant when he presided over the engineers' association at Petrobras but now an intransigent antistatist.

Judging from the agenda for tomorrow's meeting, the council, whose chief characteristic is its private enterprise profile, is going to follow the minister's advice to the letter.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

One item to be debated as part of its first task—that of reforming the state—will be a proposal by sociologist Helio Jaguaribe that he has already submitted to the council members.

He feels it is necessary to discuss relations between society and state and the power structure, in particular so that the country will be in a position to delve further into the shortcomings of the judicial branch and the relations between that branch and the others. But the real priority, according to a consensus reached among the experts, is to hold a thoroughgoing debate on the federative system, that being one of the three approaches proposed by Jaguaribe and considered the most urgent in that it involves an issue at the very heart of all the problems being discussed by the panels.

What is expected from the professionals who will provide the administration with this advisory service is that they will indicate who is responsible for what in today's Brazil and, obviously, where the money will come from to finance activity by the Union, the states, and the municipalities.

That task is wider in scope and will take a long time to achieve. But as far as reform of the state apparatus is concerned, the council will be in a position to indicate quickly approaches to the serious problems afflicting the administration, and some of those approaches will constitute further developments of the reforms that President Fernando Henrique wants to carry out now.

On that point, attorney Piquet Carneiro, along with Mailson and Abranches, members of a committee responsible for presenting the first substantive studies tomorrow will mention two questions that will be analyzed as a priority matter. Ethics in the executive branch is one of them.

This is a problem that is always discussed when some government official is caught doing something wrong. This question was on the agenda throughout last year, starting with the well-known cases involving conflicts of interest in actions by Milton Dallari, Henrique Hargreaves, and Julio Cesar Gomes do Santos. And in Brazil even today, there are no standards or basic rules that can serve as points of reference for an official's actions or his punishment.

The other priority is the designing of a new model for the regulatory agencies that will begin to operate in the areas of infrastructure such as—principally—telecommunications, energy, and petroleum as a result of last year's congressional approval of the rules governing deregulation.

Until now, it has been the state which has traditionally decided who can operate in those areas and how. The concessions will now be subject to regulatory agencies, which will need to have not only technical competence but also independence and autonomy. Attorney Piquet Carneiro believes that the question of autonomy, which is not traditional in Brazil, will lead to heated debate.

With independence and technical competence—requirements that rule out political appointments, for example—the new regulatory agencies will be required, as one example, to harmonize rate policies with the interests of the citizens and an appropriate return for the firms.

That is a radical shock in a system set up to serve the state. And a good beginning on a plan for future government.

Chile

Chile: Fernandez 'Repudiation' of Cuba's Downing of Plane

PY0203033696 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 1 Mar 96 p C2

[FBIS Translated Text] Mariano Fernandez, Chilean foreign relations under secretary, stated yesterday that the Chilean Government is not expressing its support for the United States but rather its categorical repudiation of the action of a Cuban Air Force fighter plane against civilian planes.

Fernandez thus referred to the position assumed by our country, rejecting the attack last weekend on two airplanes of the anti-Castro organization "Brothers to the Rescue" over the Caribbean Sea by Cuban war planes.

The incident resulted in the death of at least three people and the generalized repudiation of several countries, headed by the Washington administration.

Fernandez explained that the downing of a plane for violating the airspace of a country is something that should have been overcome in our times, because "it violates all principles of this new civilization which is emerging after the Cold War."

He added that the Chilean condemnation of the Cuban action does not imply support for U.S. policy toward Cuba; however, during this period of mankind's history, the values of human dignity must prevail throughout the world. For this reason, there are no arguments to justify this type of violent action.

Fernandez made these remarks yesterday after a 40-minute meeting between Cuban Ambassador Aramis Fuentes and Foreign Minister Jose Miguel Insulza, during which they analyzed the issue.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

In the afternoon, a delegation of the Communist Party headed by its president, Gladys Marin, and leader Volodia Teitelboim arrived at the Foreign Ministry to talk about the same issue.

After the meeting between Insulza and Ambassador Fuentes, the Cuban ambassador said that his country respects the position that Chile might adopt, as any other nation.

"The problem is not Chile, because between us there is no conflict whatsoever, no strange situation. It goes beyond the obvious action of the violation of Cuban sovereignty by terrorist organizations originating from U.S. territory," he said.

The Cuban ambassador added that the United States is a "fierce wolf that wants to wear sheep's clothing" and that foments continuous violations of his country's sovereignty through actions which he called "totally arrogant."

Fuentes recalled that within a period of less than a year, there had been more than 27 illegal flights over Cuba, and no concrete measures have been taken against them, "but there is a limit to patience and tolerance, and measures must be adopted to defend the rights of Cuba."

Chile: Insulza Discusses Plane Incident With Cuban Envoy

PY0103165496 Santiago Universidad Catolica Television Internacional in Spanish 0000 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Cuban ambassador in Chile said today that his country has the right to defend its sovereignty at any price, thus justifying the downing of two civilian light airplanes by Cuban jets.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter] The Chilean Foreign Ministry supported the U.S. Government by rejecting the Cuban downing of two civilian airplanes that violated Cuban air space. Today, the Cuban ambassador visited Foreign Minister Jose Miguel Insulza to explain the Cuban position on this incident. [passage omitted]

Also leaders of the Communist Party of Chile met with Foreign Minister Insulza this afternoon to express their rejection of the Chilean Government decision to support the U.S. measures against Cuba. [end recording]

Colombia

Colombia: Correspondent Notes Decertification by U.S.

PA0103222896 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1830 GMT 1 Mar 96

[Report by Caracol News Director Dario Arizmendi — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Arizmendi] We now bring you a last-minute and special report. Your attention please. Colombia has just been decertified in its struggle against drugs. The announcement has just been made in Washington during a news conference that is about to conclude. Good afternoon, Gilberto Cabrera, Caracol correspondent in Washington.

[Cabrera] Good afternoon, Dario. As you have just said, President Bill Clinton has decertified Colombia. [10-second break in reception]

[Cabrera] Ambassador Gelbard said that Colombia had received certification last year, but this year the certification was denied. The ambassador mentioned that one of the reasons that caused Colombia's decertification this year was the lack of commitment by President Samper and his administration in having the Colombian police force put an end to the drug war. The ambassador did give credit to individual persons, but the Samper administration failed. We repeat, the administration failed.

The news conference continues at this point, and Ambassadors Gelbard and Wirth are providing more detailed information. However, this is the last—minute information we have. The ambassadors also said that illegal coca crops continue to grow and that the Samper administration did not commit itself to imprison the cartel capos, particularly of the Cali cartel, for the crimes they have committed and with sentences related to those crimes.

That is all the information we have from Washington.

Colombia: Congressmen React to U.S. Decertification

PA0103210296 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1853 GMT 1 Mar 96

[Report by Juan Gossain]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Gossain] We now bring you some reactions from Pereira, the capital of Risaralda Department. What does the president of the Chamber of Representatives say?

[Unidentified reporter] Yes, Juan, we have Rodrigo Rivera Salazar here with us. Dr. Rivera Salazar, what

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

do you think of the decision the U.S. Government has made in recent hours of not granting certification to our country?

[Rivera] I think this decision is very grave, and it will have serious repercussions for the country. In addition, it is humiliating for a society — such as Colombia — which has demonstrated effectiveness in its struggle against drug trafficking, which has defeated narco-terrorism; which is confronting the scourge of narco-corruption at the institutional, political, and social levels, and which is doing this in an independent manner, without any foreign pressures.

[Reporter] Dr. Rivera Salazar, do you think this measure will entail the removal [salida] of President Ernesto Samper Pizano?

[Rivera] I hope you understand that in our condition as congressmen and therefore, as judges of the president of the Republic, we cannot answer this type of question. I think that all we can say at this time is that Colombia will continue to operate as a democracy with or without international solidarity; it will continue searching for the truth; it will continue investigating through all of its branches of justice, the Prosecutor General's Office, the Supreme Court of Justice, and the National Congress. It will continue searching for the truth, to the very last consequences, always trying to make justice prevail so that the guilty persons will be sentenced and the innocent ones will be absolved.

Colombia is going to do that, because the present and the future of the fatherland is at stake.

[Gossain] That was Rodrigo Rivera Salazar, president of the Chamber of Representatives, speaking live from his hometown, Pereira. We now bring you statements by the president of the National Conservative Directorate.

[Reporter] Senator Jaime Arias Ramirez, good afternoon. What do you think of the U.S. Government's decision announced today?

[Arias] In the first place, I am not surprised. I think we all kind of hoped that [words indistinct], but naturally, it is terribly bad news for the country, and it will have serious repercussions, particularly in the economic field. We hope that the measures will not be very harsh.

As Juan said a few minutes ago, I think this is some sort of a moral punishment in the international field. It is a humiliation for Colombia, it is very harsh one, and I think all Colombians — not just the government — are going to have to pay for this. I think the country's reaction is too big. [sentence as heard]

I think that in the future, we have to think more about making our own internal efforts [words indistinct] if we have truly put up a good enough struggle to put an end to drug trafficking, and not wait for people from abroad to analyze what has been our behavior.

[Reporter] As a congressman, do you abstain from commenting on the repercussions this decision will have on the future of President Samper's government?

[Arias] No, not at all. I do want to make a comment. I think this is much too harsh for President Samper. I think these are signals coming from abroad that will carry a lot of weight in the president's decision of staying or withdrawing from the government. [words indistinct] an influence in the case being discussed now in Congress, but it contributes greatly to measure President Samper's capacity for governability.

[Gossain] Dr. Arias, looking at this, from a political point of view, from the internal point of view, that is, from the crisis that we are enduring, what will the influence of the U.S. decision be as of this afternoon?

[Arias] Well, there are several possibilities, Juan. I think this is a terrible blow for the president and for the government, because it worsens the crisis. On the other hand, I imagine that this will serve so that Dr. Horacio Serpa will build a [words indistinct] that will help him very much, from the people's point of view.

[Gossain] Senator Arias Ramirez, thank you very much for your statements to Radio Cadena Nacional.

Colombia: Police Vow To Continue Eradication of Drugs

PA0103222596 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1905 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Police Director General Rosso Jose Serrano has been caught by surprise by the U.S. Government's announcement of the decertification of Colombia regarding the struggle against drugs.

Serrano said he will study the U.S. pronouncement and that he will wait for instructions from the president of the Republic and the foreign minister to make a decision. He also said the police will keep working tirelessly to eradicate illegal coca, marijuana, and poppy crops and eliminate coca processing laboratories. Just like Admiral Jorge Villamil, Serrano said it makes no difference to the Armed Forces whether or not there is certification.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Colombia: Justice Minister Says UK Aid To Continue

PA0103202196 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1908 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Justice Minister Carlos Medellin Becerra has said that Colombia will turn toward the European Community and Great Britain, in particular. A counterdrug agreement will be signed with with the latter country.

[Begin recording] [Medellin] [Words indistinct] One, a bilateral agreement with Great Britain. Two, a bilateral agreement with the European Union, which is very important. And three, a multilateral cooperation agreement with the Inter-American Convention against money laundering. These agreements are very important. We continue to be determined to work together.

[Reporter] What about the bilateral agreement with Great Britain?

[Medellin] This is a very important agreement where [words indistinct] assets with the possibility of seizing properties, exchange evidence and experience, and support police and judicial authorities, and everything dealing with this matter. [end recording]

The justice minister said there will surely be economic cooperation from Great Britain as the result of the U.S. decertification, which was just issued Colombia.

Colombia: Foreign Minister Decries U.S. Decertification

PA0103211196 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1934 GMT 1 Mar 96

[Statement by Foreign Minister Rodrigo Pardo at Narino Palace in Bogota; broadcast in progress — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] ...to ask the U.S. authorities to acknowledge our achievements, and it also proves that the evaluation process conducted by the U.S. authorities is not based on objective, (?measured) criteria and is [word indistinct] by reasons that are political in nature.

In this context, we consider this meddling in Colombia's internal affairs unacceptable, and we regret the change in the policy that the United States had officially expressed on this issue.

Colombia and the international community can rest assured that despite the domestic difficulties caused by the struggle against drugs and the United States' unilateral decision, the Colombian Government will not dismay in the struggle against drug trafficking. This is an issue of national interest that compromises the efforts of the government as well as that of Colombian society in its entirety.

Drug trafficking is a worldwide problem; therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge that Colombia's entire effort will not be enough if the rest of the international community does not pledge to the same extent to combat this scourge.

Therefore, a unilateral [words indistinct] of responsibility, as an attempt is being made to do in the case of the certification process, does not only weaken the possibility of joint efforts but facilitates the work of the criminal drug trafficking organizations.

Colombia will continue to seek, without any hesitation whatsoever, [words indistinct] Vienna Convention and the United Nations, to [word indistinct] multilateral mechanisms to combat drug trafficking.

The finance minister will hold a new conference at 1600 to discuss the economic effects of this decision, and President Ernesto Samper will address the nation tonight. Thank you very much.

Colombia: Finance Minister on Effects of Decertification

PA0203004896 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 2121 GMT 1 Mar 96

[News conference by Finance Minister Guillermo Perry Rubio with unidentified reporters and moderator Monica Echeverri at his office in Santa Fe de Bogota — live; poor reception precludes fuller processing]

[FBIS Summary] During a 44-minute news conference, Minister Perry starts by saying that "the adverse decision the U.S. Government made has taken the Colombian Government, as well as all Colombians, by surprise; we did not expect it, and we believe it is unfair. From an economic standpoint, the effects of the decertification are minor. In the commercial arena, there are no immediate effects, and the preferences of the Andean Tariff Preference Agreement, ATPA, or the Generalized Preference System, GPS, are not suspended due to the decertification." He goes on to say that "in the financial arena, half of the concession aid, which you are aware is a very modest aid, as well as new credits from the Eximbank, are suspended." Perry then explains that the balance of the debt owed to the Eximbank is barely $158 million, which, when compared to the $14.18 billion foreign public debt, represents only 1.11 percent. He proceeds to list the amount of loans the Eximbank lent Colombia and the loan contracts the country signed with this bank in the 1993-95 period, adding that the contract signed in January 1996 for $185 million will go through since it was already approved. The Eximbank was planning to grant two more loans for the Colombian Petroleum Enterprise, Ecopetrol, and the Cusiana-El

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Puerto oil pipeline. These funds will have to be sought from other sources. Minister Perry then says: "In short, the effects of the decertification on Colombian financing are practically insignificant, as the Eximbank loans have always represented barely 1 percent of the credits of the public sector in the last few years." He then explains that the decertification will not adversely affect the approval of loans by the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, because even if the United States opposes these loans, it has only one vote.

Perry insists that the decertification was unfortunate from a political standpoint and that it may have some effects on certain economic variables. He then says: "in commercial matters, there are no immediate effects. The certification process does not significantly affect any of these variables." Afterward, he explains that Colombia continues to sell securities in foreign banks and that they are still selling well. As an example, he mentions last week's record-breaking security sales in the Japanese market. Minister Perry then assesses that Colombia's future is in the hands of Colombians, as has always been the case, adding that the country's economic growth and stability depend on three factors: its businessmen's decision to invest, innovate, and be more competitive; its workers' decision to become more skilled and work harder for the country; and prudent economic policies. Perry concludes his presentation by recalling that Colombia recorded the highest level of investments in history amid the political crisis.

Approximately 15 minutes after Perry started, moderator Echeverri says that he is willing to answer a few questions from reporters. Questioned if the decertification would trigger a reassessment of the government's internal and foreign policies, the minister replies that no, that will not happen as the credits usually obtained from the Eximbank can be obtained from other sources. Immediately after, the Radio Cadena Nacional reporter tells him that it seems that businessmen and people in general do not share his enthusiasm. He replies that the leaders of the business associations do have the same opinion as his: "We will prove that the decertification will not have any trade or economic effects and that the financial effects are minor."

Reporters continue to ask questions, most of which are unmonitorable. One of them asks why there is so much concern if the effects of the decertification are said to be so insignificant. Perry replies: "First, it was unfair; it could have been a recognition of what the country did last year. It could have prevented any bad consequences, regardless of how small they are." Perry goes on to answer many more questions dealing with the impact of the decertification on the country; he keeps insisting that the damage will be minor and that it will not adversely affect the country's image.

Another reporter asks the minister if Colombia has thought about looking for other markets, mainly in Asia, now that the U.S. market will not be so receptive of Colombian products. He answers that Colombian exporters have always had strategies of diversification. "Besides, Colombia did not put all its eggs in one basket; there are other baskets available," he retorted. As for the relations with the United States, he says that it is not his turf.

Perry's news conference concludes at 2205 GMT.

Colombia: Gaviria, Envoy to U.S. on Decertification

PA0103233996 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 2200 GMT 1 Mar 96

[From the "RCN Radio Events" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] Two very important statements have been issued on the U.S. decertification of Colombia.

One of them is signed by former President Cesar Gaviria, current OAS secretary general. Former Presient Gaviria stated: I cannot but lament the U.S. Government decision not to certify Colombia. This decision does not recognize the efforts of millions of good Colombians who pay a very high personal price in their struggle against the criminal drug trafficking organizations.

As other Colombians, Gaviria added, I hope the decision will not precipitate additional measures that will eventually affect the flow of foreign investments, trade, and financing, unjustly harming the great majority of Colombian citizens. The international community should respect the process Colombia is experiencing and its efforts to overcome its crisis. This process must be resolved through the established constitutional means and with strict respect for our state of law, former President Gaviria stated.

The other communique we have just received is signed by Carlos Lleras de la Fuente, Colombian Ambassador to the United States: I reject the White House decision to decertify our country because of an alleged lack of cooperation in the struggle against drugs. This decision, Lleras de la Fuente stated, ignores the firm commitment the honest people of Colombia have maintained against the scourge of drug trafficking for more than 25 years. It also especially ignores the unprecedented successes that Colombia achieved in that battle in 1995.

Ambassador Lleras de la Fuente added that despite the lack of solidarity of one of our partners, Colombians

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

will maintain our commitment to stopping the power of drug trafficking in our country.

Colombia: Police, Military Leaders on Decertification

PA0203213396 Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 2 Mar 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] Statement by General Rosso Jose Serrano Cadena, Police director general:

"The decertification of Colombia is regrettable. I think that the only ones affected by it are the country, and a great majority of good Colombians in particular. [sentence as published]

"The results of Colombia's antinarcotics struggle cannot be compared at the international level. No other country in the world can show results like ours can in its struggle against different kinds of drug trafficking.

"My commitment in this struggle is with my country, all Colombians, and humanity, and the police will continue to move forward because of its moral conviction and its commitment to the national and international communities.

"The Colombian police department's struggle against drug trafficking has been advanced with the help and support of the government, the Colombian people, the military forces, and the Prosecutor General's Office. I must also admit, as I have during the dismantling process [not further identified], that the CIA and the DEA have cooperated with us.

"Decertification will not affect the struggle that the police have waged for many years — quite the contrary — with the support of the Colombian people, we will give no respite and will move forward, even if other countries do not assume their role of neutralizing this scourge by controlling money laundering, chemicals used to process drugs, and weapons that come from abroad.

"What is most important for all Colombians is that we are aware that we have worked and will continue to work with dignity and with a moral conviction in this war on drugs."

Meanwhile, General Hernando Camilo Zuniga Chaparro, commander of the military forces, said the following to EL TIEMPO:

"The Armed Forces were saddened to hear about the decertification. It will never be possible, however, to decertify the large amount of blood that all Colombians have shed, and especially the public force, whose endless efforts and sacrifices are already certified by history and more than fully certified by the death of so many Colombians.

"We will not be frightened by decertification; now more than ever the Armed Forces are committed to fighting this scourge and will continue to combat it until eliminating it from Colombia and the world."

Colombia: Defense, Police Heads Reject Decertification

PA0203024196 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 2 Mar 96

[From the "Seven O'Clock Newscast"; monitored from retransmission by Lima Sistema Unido de Retransmision at 0100 GMT on 2 March]

[FBIS Translated Text] Two of the men who have fought drug trafficking in Colombia the most, Defense Minister Juan Carlos Esguerra and Police Director General Rosso Jose Serrano received news of the decertification like this:

[Begin recording] [Esguerra] It is a monumental injustice to the Republic of Colombia. It absolutely does not reflect the huge efforts, which the government, the military forces, and the national police have been conducting in this area.

[Serrano] No one, absolutely no one can say that our struggle has not been efficient, that an exaggerated amount of work has been done. [end recording]

Colombia: Politicians React to U.S. Decertification

PA0203232296 Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 2 Mar 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] Vice President Humberto de la Calle has said that the decertification overshadows relations with the United States and harms Colombian workers and businessmen. Juan Manuel Santos: "It is an unacceptable intervention."

Cesar Gaviria Trujillo, former president and OAS secretary general, asked the international community to respect the manner in which Colombia is handling its domestic crisis. He did this as he deplored the decision U.S. President Bill Clinton made yesterday, which, in Gaviria's opinion, ignores the country's efforts to fight drug trafficking.

Spokesmen for Colombian politicians made similar statements, including Vice President De la Calle; Carlos Lleras de la Fuente, Colombian ambassador to the

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

United States; and former presidential designate Juan Manuel Santos. Following are their statements:

Gaviria's Statements

"With the limitations that my being the OAS secretary general imposes on me, on several occasions I have voiced my opinions on issues pertaining to the current political crisis in Colombia, fulfilling the obligations I have as former president and those that relate to me in defense of our democracy.

"I believe that the so-called certification the U.S. government issues annually on the cooperation of the countries that are part of the international fight against drug trafficking is undoubtedly an issue very relevant for Colombia.

"This is why, along with former presidents Alfonso Lopez Michelsen, Julio Cesar Turbay, Victor Mosquera, and Belisario Bethancourt, on 15 February we sent a letter to U.S. President William J. Clinton on this issue. In this letter, we explained the significance of recognizing the countless efforts Colombia has made in the fight against drug trafficking. We also explained the inadvisability of not recognizing our country's achievements and, therefore, of not certifying it. We stressed the damage a decision in this regard would cause to the multilateral efforts of this fight.

"This is why the least I can do is stress what was said on that occasion and regret the decision the U.S. has made to decertify Colombia. This decision fails to recognize the efforts millions of good Colombians made, Colombians who pay a very high personal price in their fights against the criminal organizations of drug trafficking.

"As for the rest of Colombians, I hope that what happened will not trigger additional measures that would eventually affect the flows of investments, trade, and foreign financing, which would harm, in the most unfair manner, the great majority of our country's citizens.

"The international community must respect the process through which Colombia is going and its efforts to overcome the crisis it is experiencing. It is necessary for this process to be resolved through stipulated constitutional means and in strict compliance with our state of law.

"Colombia has always been at the vanguard of the fight against drug trafficking, and its contribution in this regard has been and is essential for the global effectiveness of these efforts. Sanctioning the Colombian people in general only harms a task that is long and that corresponds not only to a country, but also to the entire international community."

Not Favorable

Vice President de la Calle asked the U.S. Government to reconsider and understand that "its decision fails to contribute to the two people's objective" in the fight against drugs.

De la Calle said: "According to what Vice President Al Gore said not long ago, a measure of this nature discourages us, overshadows our bilateral relations that have always been of mutual cooperation, and punishes thousands of Colombian workers and businessmen, most of whom are honest people, as a result of the political crisis we are experiencing."

However, the vice president asked Colombians not to engage in nationalist praise, because "it is a very difficult path that leads nowhere and that favors only drug traffickers and the other illegal groups. Colombia will not remain immersed in this crisis," De la Calle said. "What we will do is to continue what we have done until now: fight crime and support the higher courts, the Prosecutor General's Office, and the Armed Forces."

Lleras Speaks

Lleras, Colombian ambassador to the United States, yesterday strongly rejected Bill Clinton's decision to decertify Colombia for an alleged lack of cooperation in the fight against drugs. "This decision ignores the firm commitment the honest Colombian people have made for 25 years against the drug trafficking scourge and, especially, the unprecedented achievements Colombia made in this fight in 1995," he pointed out.

Lleras said that it is incredible that in a year when Colombia had its best performance in its struggle against drug trafficking, the U.S. Government decided to give the country the lowest rating and "justified this action with a document full of ambiguities and contradictions."

According to the diplomat, "evaluations of Colombia for 1994 and 1995 show that a better performance received a worse rating."

Lleras noted that "signs such as the one sent by the United States today demoralize a country whose inhabitants have offered even their lives in the battle against a problem that has international origins."

The ambassador added that the only effective means to face international drug trafficking is cooperation among the countries involved in the problem and not through unilateral actions such as the certification.

"Drug traffickers will be the only ones to benefit by the decision made today," he pointed out.

Lleras noted that despite the severe moral blow suffered today by millions of honest Colombians, the country

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

will maintain its firm conviction of fighting the drug problem.

Meanwhile, former Presidential Designate Juan Manuel Santos said: "The U.S. Government made a unilateral decision to punish the entire country and the only fact it had to formulate such an opinion was the serious political crisis facing the current government."

Santos described the decision as "unacceptable meddling in our internal affairs." He added that "there is nothing more unjust than this. The United States, which is the largest drug consumer in the world that has decreased its struggle against drug consumption, opted to impose a punishment that causes a deep pain to Colombians and very serious economic damage to the national society."

The former minister said that the U.S. decision "tarnishes the spirit and memory of thousands of outstanding and anonymous Colombians that have made sacrifices for the past 10 years in a war against organized crime that no country has waged in the way our country has."

Finally, Santos said: "I have no doubt that a good part of the political responsiblity for this blow falls on the Samper government. I hope that the president will admit this and that he will also understand that the solution to this deplorable situation is in his hands."

The National Association of Industrialists (ANDI) regretted the U.S. decision to decertify Colombia for its antidrug struggle and said that this will become another element of economic disturbance.

ANDI made an urgent call on the government to reinforce its efforts against drug trafficking and urged monetary authorities to be on the alert to prevent possible foreign exchange distortions.

Jorge Ramirez Ocampo, president of the National Association of Exporters (Analdex), pointed out that Colombia did not deserve a decertification, because this decision is not in keeping with the country's achievements in its struggle against drug trafficking.

"Despite repeated statements that there will be no additional economic sanctions, we must remember that there are some automatic actions established by U.S. law that affect the financial area in particular, and this could have indirect negative effects," Ramirez added.

Jaime Alberto Cabal, president of the Colombian Association of Small Industries (Acopi), described the decertification as political punishment.

However, he emphasized that the decision not to adopt measures affecting the economy can be considered an achievement of the Colombian business sector.

The Acopi leader sees two unfortunate consequences: First, a bad international image could stop investments in the country, and second, the Clinton government could apply commercial sanctions against Colombia.

Colombia: Business Leaders React to Decertification

PA0203023296 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Canal A Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 2 Mar 96

[From the "Seven O'Clock Newscast"; monitored from retransmission by Lima Sistema Unido de Retransmision at 0100 GMT on 2 March; passsages within quotation marks recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sabas Pretelt, president of the National Federation of Businessmen, said that more than the negative effects on the economy, the serious thing about the decertification is the sanctions at the moral level. We have reactions from the economic sector.

[Pretelt] "It is a very hard blow to the honor of Colombians, because we were placed right up there with Saddam Husayn and the descendants of the Ayatollah."

In economic matters, however, business associations remained relatively calm, because the implications are not as serious as previously thought.

[Jorge Ramirez Ocampo, president of the National Association of Exporters] "It is possible that direct consequences may be felt in the financial field, especially the financing provided by multilateral agencies."

[Unidentified business leader] "The damage is to Colombia's image abroad. Tourism and foreign investment may be adversely affected."

The business associations reiterated their proposal to have President Ernesto Samper temporarily separate himself from his post.

[Unidentified business leader] "This definitely obstructs the president's capability to govern. I mean the president's temporary separation could help solve the political crisis while he defends himself. If he wins, he would return to the presidency with full powers."

Colombia: Samper Address on U.S. Decertification

PA0203011996 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Network in Spanish 0002 GMT 2 Mar 96

[President Ernesto Samper Pizano address to the nation from Narino Palace in Santa Fe de Bogota — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] Colombians, the U.S. Government adopted today the decision not to certify the struggle waged by Colombia against drug trafficking

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

throughout 1995. The decision was adopted despite the intensive efforts exerted by Ambassador Carlos Lleras, whose work I publicly recognize and value. As president, more than that, as Colombian the decision astonishes and angers me.

I also deplore the fact it was adopted disregarding important commentaries and important Colombian and foreign outcry requesting a favorable consideration for Colombia. The statements by presidents, journalists, political analysts, important businessmen, fellow citizens living abroad, and national and foreign media were disregarded.

The greatest beneficiaries of the non-recognition of the efforts exerted by Colombia are the drug traffickers, themselves, who are surely watching with pleasure at this moment how those who risked their lives to take them to prison, intercept their accursed drug shipments, or destroy their illegal crops are being internationally disqualified — thousands of Policemen and soldiers, judges and prosecutors, and honorable officials whose authority and honesty are thus challenged today.

It is also clear for the Colombian Government that this decision openly contradicts the conclusive evidence which Colombia shows in its struggle against drug trafficking in 1995. No government had achieved so much in such a short time like the current one within the development of the overall policy of struggle against drugs outlined by my government — 30,476 hectares of illegal crops have been destroyed since 7 February 1995 and a sizable number of them have been replaced with legal crops through the National Alternative Development Plan, Plante.

We have arrested the leadership of the so-called Cali cartel, which handled — according to the estimates of their own U.S. drug agencies — more than 80 percent of the world's cocaine trade. An additional 2,800 drug traffickers were arrested and various of these foreign drug traffickers were extradited. The most important confiscations of chemical components known in recent history within the world's struggle against drug trafficking were carried out. The San Andres and Providencia Archipelago was militarized, precisely to curb drug shipments to Mexico.

The Congress of the Republic passed basic laws in connection with the laundering of assets, the increase in sentences, and security measures in prisons. The drug seizures carried out last year represented, hear this, 5.5 billion doses, meaning 5.5 million of millions less doses of cocaine and heroin in all the world's homes. More then 500 security agents lost their lives in the course of all these drug operations and all these actions involved a cost of $984 million, which came out of the Colombian taxpayers' pockets almost in its entirety because we only received a tenth of this in foreign aid.

In fact, the importance of these results was recently recognized by the International Narcotics Board, a UN organization that explicitly identified our country before the world as a true example of the pledge to fight drugs. The UN prosecutors state the following in their report, and I quote, the board observes with approval the satisfactory eradication and interception efforts exerted in Colombia, which led to the destruction of a large number of illegal crops, the confiscation of various clandestine laboratories and substantial amounts of illegal drugs, unquote. Furthermore, I quote, the board appreciates the satisfactory measures adopted in Colombia against the powerful drug cartels, unquote. Finally, and I quote, the board is pleased to welcome the approval of a national drug supervision plan by Colombia's National Drug Council, unquote.

What further proof does the world want of Colombia's commitment in this unequal struggle against drugs, in which we lose money and lives and others reserve themselves the right to judge us? How many more Colombians' lives must be sacrificed to endorse the results achieved by the costly and bloody struggle we have been waging for more than 20 years? By God, how many more schools do we have to leave without building, how many hospital beds must be sacrificed, and the construction of how many homes must be postponed so it is understood that the Colombians are the victims rather than the executioners in this unequal and solitary struggle? How long do we have to wait until consumer countries assume their own quota of sacrifice, cutting their levels of demand, controlling the laundering of assets and the traffic of chemicals and weapons that are killing and poisoning us?

Therefore, I cannot accept that we be told now that these results have been a product of the dedication of a few Colombian officials who worked perhaps against the rest of the country, even against the government. This statement was carefully and perversely prepared to separate the Colombian authorities into the good guys and the bad guys. I think it is dangerous and, as such, I categorically reject it.

The commitment in the struggle against drugs, which will continue with or without a certification, is a commitment that involves each and every one of my government's officials. It is also a commitment that involves the Congress of the Republic, which has approved the harshest laws against drug consumption and trafficking, and against the laundering of assets. It is a commitment that involves the judges and the prosecutors who are conducting investigations. Above

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

all, it is a commitment that involves each and every honest Colombian.

Thus, it is clear that, in the face of all this overwhelming evidence, there were other reasons for the adoption of a decision that significantly disrupts the terms of a relationship and long years of bilateral cooperation, through which Colombia and the United States managed to build and maintain a firm and constructive alliance against drug trafficking.

The certification process has ended up becoming an instrument of intervention in the internal affairs of countries subjected to it. It does not involve an administrative decision based on an objective evaluation of the struggle against drug trafficking, instead it is a political decision and, in this case, an unfair decision and assuredly one for well-known electoral reasons.

In a unilateral manner, without rules and known judges, the certification is used to try to condemn a country, its government, its institutions, and even its inhabitants before the international community. If the reasons that led to this decision were related to Colombia's domestic crisis it would be even more unacceptable, because it would contitute a break in the neutrality announced by the U.S. Government itself toward the judicial process that we are facing.

We Colombians will find a definitive solution to the crisis, while respecting our Constitution, without undermining the state of law or affecting the stability of our democratic system. As president of Colombia, I will accept no foreign meddling in the resolution of the political crisis. We Colombians will solve this crisis in a Colombian way, without accepting help or permitting obstacles from anyone abroad.

I made this commitment with the country, and I will fulfill it regardless of what happens and the cost involved. I publicly ask the prosecutor general to investigate the charges of alleged obstruction of justice by my government, as stated in the U.S. Government report, to justify the measure it adopted today.

The international community can rest completely assured that this deplorable U.S. Government decision will absolutely not affect the unbreakable determination of Colombians to forever eradicate the scourge of drug trafficking from our own territory. We will not surrender a single millimeter in this struggle we are waging, for the sake not only of our children, but of all world youths. We will reinforce alliances established with other countries to continue a struggle that should effectively commit the entire world.

We will also monitor the development of drug consumption. Colombians also have the right to certify the failure of those countries that have tolerated the consumption and laundering of assets through which the profits of the drug business are recycled.

They, the consumers, will have to be accountable to the widows of the policemen who fell in this long battle in Colombia, to the orphans of the political leaders who were sacrificed, to the thousands of Colombians humiliated at international airports, to the honest compatriots who continue to work and struggle to achieve a positive Colombia, the Colombia that is never mentioned in international headlines.

As the finance minister said today, Colombian businessmen can rest assured that the government supports them and will continue to support them. We have already established a commercial compensation plan that will be applied if it is necessary, and we also have financial solutions in place to handle the very small impact that this decision could have on a few sectors of our economy. We will support these businessmen as long as necessary.

This is a bad time but it is not a catastrophe. Quite the contrary, it poses a challenge for us; a challenge to continue producing and working; a challenge to also continue opening commercial opportunities, new opportunities; a challenge to continue upholding the good name of Colombia by increasing its commerce; a challenge to continue fighting drug trafficking with the cooperation of all countries that truly want to work with us.

This is why, in light of the decision made today to decertify Colombia as an ally of the United States in the struggle against drug trafficking, my government will reassess the terms of the bilateral cooperation that has served as the basis for joint antidrug programs.

To compensate for the announced cutback in U.S. aid for these same programs, I instructed the finance minister today to immediately allocate the budget funds to compensate for all the resources we may require.

I cannot forget that one of the most delicate effects of this measure has to do with the way it could adversely affect our international image. The recent handling of the judicial process that has unleashed this political crisis has ended up sending to the world the wrong image, that we are a type of narcodemocracy.

It is an image, which the enemies of Colombia have taken advantage of, including, unfortunately, some Colombians, who without regard for their country, have tried to transfer the discussion of our internal affairs to international information forums.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

The time has come, my dear friends, for all of us, without exception, to sincerely examine the damage we are inflicting on ourselves with this self-destructive capability we Colombians have. While doing it, we will continue to fight drug trafficking. We are going to find international support where we can find understanding for our struggle. We are going to support businessmen to prevent them from failing in their productive activities. We are going to continue to support foreign investors so they can continue to believe in Colombia. Let us prove to the world that despite all the difficulties, Colombia continues to push forward. We are going to handle this situation with serenity but with firmness to achieve these goals.

To continue to defend our country and its sovereignty I have the only certification I need, the one given to me by the Colombian people when they elected me president. As long as I have it, as long as I have your and God's help, here I am and here I will remain.

Good night.

Colombia: Prosecutor's Communique on Decertification

PA0203021596 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 0037 GMT 2 Mar 96

["Text" of communique from the Prosecutor General's Office of the Nation; read by announcer — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. Government's decision not to certify the actions carried out by Colombia against drug production and trafficking is undoubtedly an adverse circumstance for our nation and demands a consistent and determined attitude from all social groups against the drug problem.

We cannot disown the effects that may be generated by this decision, which was adopted against our country in a unilateral manner. These effects will demand sacrifices that only have meaning in the measure that conditions may be changed in the short term.

We must continue to achieve progress in this encouraging period of institutional actions against criminal organizations involved in drug trafficking and against the absurd sequel of corruption. Even though we have suffered so much for such a long time, the challenges were disregarded. The country must now redouble its efforts against organized crime and its fatal consequences to recover social stability.

Colombians are increasingly committed to the goal of overcoming this nightmare, which has accompanied us with so much bitterness for the last 20 years. We cannot be diverted or discouraged by surmountable obstacles. Judicial cooperation, with the international community's participation, will continue to facilitate the work carried out by the Prosecutor General's Office.

The responsibilities assumed by the Prosecutor General's Office can only be reasserted at this time with more determination. Colombia will be able to overcome this difficult test.

Colombia: VP Issues Communique on Decertification

PA0203041196 Paris AFP in Spanish 2123 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 1 Mar (AFP) — Colombian Vice President Humberto de la Calle said on Friday that the United States' decision not to certify Colombia in its struggle against drug trafficking is "unfair," and he warned that this measure "darkens" relations between the two countries and causes "discouragement" among Colombians.

In a communique that was issued in Spain, where he acts as ambassador, and published in Santa Fe de Bogota, De la Calle deplored the "decertification" adopted by U.S. President Bill Clinton.

The Colombian vice president said "the decertification is unfair for a nation whose judges and Armed Forces and Police struggle without respite, even risking their lives and their families' lives, against the drug trafficking scourge, an evil that affects the whole world and that will not be eliminated without a serious commitment from all nations."

He added: "Therefore, I expect the U.S. Government to reconsider and understand that its decision does not help achieve the two countries' goal."

After mentioning that he had recently sent a letter to his U.S. counterpart, requesting his support so that Colombia would receive the certification, De la Calle said the "decertification" punishes thousands of workers and businessmen.

The Colombian vice president urged the Colombian people "not to participate in hot-headed nationalist actions that lead nowhere and only favor the drug traffickers."

"What we will do is continue with what we have done until now: fight crime and support the courts, the Office of the Prosecutor General, and the Armed Forces," he emphasized.

Lastly, De la Calle, who did not mention President Ernesto Samper or express support for him, asserted that Colombia will continue to struggle against drug trafficking "because this is a commitment to the international community and, above all, to ourselves."

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Colombia: Barranquilla Residents Protest Decertification

PA0303041396 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2357 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 2 Mar (NOTIMEX) — A large demonstration against the U.S. decertification of Colombia's drug fight was staged this afternoon in the Caribbean port of Barranquilla.

According to Barranquilla Mayor George Gonzalez, thousands of people heeded a call to state a protest at the port's main thoroughfares against "the clear intervention by the government of William Clinton in Colombia's domestic affairs."

Dozens of drivers joined the march by honking their horns for more than three hours. The Barranquilla residents hoisted the Colombian flag and shouted slogans against the "U.S. imperialism."

The United States decertified Colombia after considering that the government of Ernesto Samper failed to work adequately to eradicate the drug scourge. The government and political and social sectors strongly rejected Washington's decision as they considered it to be a political and electoral decision that failed to recognize the huge sacrifice that hundreds of Colombians made in the daily task of fighting the drug-trafficking mafias.

More street protests in several cities around the country are expected for the next few hours.

Colombia: Press Blames U.S. Decertification on Samper

PA0403034696 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1843 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 3 Mar (NOTIMEX) — The Colombian press today harshly criticized President Ernesto Samper's administration over the U.S. decision to refuse to certify its struggle against drug trafficking.

The newspapers stated in their editorials that the U.S. decertification is the result of the government's lack of responsibility and the country's corruption and hinted their wish for President Samper to tender his resignation.

"It is not a fatal turnout, but it is shameful and sad," the influential EL ESPECTADOR newspaper said. It explained that the country is ashamed over the negative consequences, "the circumstances and the little dignity shown by our rulers. [no end quotation mark as received]

"Colombia's prestige has been allowed to be trampled on (...) and equally taking part in that degrading contest were the president of the Republic, his ministers, the prosecutor general, the police director, and lastly the economic associations," EL ESPECTADOR stated.

It said that the crisis is deeper and goes much farther than public disorder, social contradictions, drug trafficking, and subversion.

"All these maladies originate from the proven incapacity of our politicians to assume their historical responsibility. To this one must add as an explosive detonator of their inaction, their moral corruption," it added.

It urged Colombians to resolve the crisis by democratic means "forgetting power's meanness," which is taking over the country.

The newspapers all said that the decertification was only against the Samper administration, which is accused of receiving huge sums of drug trafficking money to finance the political campaign that led him to office in 1994.

The president is under investigation by Congress for illegal enrichment, cover-up, document forgery, and electoral fraud.

The EL TIEMPO newspaper, in turn, headlined its editorial as the "Slap" and accused the president of "romantically" bolstering himself thanks to the effects caused "by the U.S. injustice."

The newspaper asked Samper to cast aside false nationalism and called on Colombians to seek solutions with prudence.

Meanwhile, opposition newspaper EL NUEVO DIARIO said that Colombia's certification was very difficult for the United States in view of the fact that there are obvious incidents of corruption in the struggle against drug trafficking that "everyone knows about."

It added that it is very shameful that the country is unable to domestically resolve the serious problems to do with narcocorruption that have led it to a severe crisis.

Colombia: Accusations Committee Receives New Evidence

PA0103143996 Santa Fe de Bogota Radio Cadena Nacional in Spanish 1200 GMT 1 Mar 96

[From the "RCN Radio Events" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic and the Supreme Court presented the Accusations Committee with new evidence related to the investigations on President Ernesto Samper for the alleged infiltration of drug trafficking money

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

during his presidential campaign. The Prosecutor General's Office presented the legislative committee copies of the documents that were seized from Panamanian reporter Ana Lisa Mir on Sunday at the Eldorado International Airport in Bogota and delivered a report on the evidence produced by the physical examination of former Defense Minister Fernando Botero's home, where documents were found on the government's handling of the investigations by the prosecutor general and the deputy prosecutor general.

Colombia: Proseutor, Attorney General on Investigations

PA0103163896 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 29 Feb 96

[From the "National Newscast"; monitored from retransmission by Lima Sistema Unido de Retransmision Television at 1830 GMT 29 Feb 96]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Attorney General's Office and the Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic are again facing each other, through mutual investigations.

Twenty-four hours after the director of the Technical Investigation Group of the of the Prosecutor's Office [CTI] disciplined the Attorney General before the Supreme Court, the Attorney General's Office responded in kind by opening an investigation that even the CTI director himself is not aware of.

[Begin CTI Director Hernan Jimenez recording] I have not received any notification, such as the law requires, to inform me that I am under investigation for misconduct. [end recording]

According to the Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic, Attorney General Orlando Vasquez filed a false report naming a person supposedly charging that alleged irregularities were committed by Prosecutor General [Alfonso] Valdivieso when he was minister of education. The CTI established in its investigation that the person does indeed exist but has never accused Valdivieso.

[Begin CTI Director Hernan Jimenez recording] That person has stated — in fact, I believe he has already testified before the Supreme Court — that he has never accused the prosecutor general of anything. [end recording]

This is not the first time a confrontation has taken place between the Office of the Prosecutor General of the Republic and the Attorney General's Office in connection with investigations of high-level officials. The first chapter was the investigation of the Prosecutor General of the Republic for his stay in the Inter-Continental Hotel and the investigation ordered by [Attorney General Orlando] Vasquez Velasquez against Assistant Prosecutor [Adolfo] Salamanca for alleged neglect in the capture of Venezuelan Police Commissioner Eduardo Iglesias, accused of having connections with a ring of car thieves.

Ecuador

Ecuador: Measures of Confidence Exchanged With Peru

PY0203023696 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0017 GMT 2 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Quito, 1 Mar (EFE) — The chiefs of the Armed Forces Joint Commands of Ecuador, Jorge Ortega, and Peru, Nicolas de Bari Hermoza, have exchanged proposals to establish measures of mutual confidence and dates for the first round of military talks between the two countries.

After the meeting with his Ecuadoran counterpart in Quito, Gen. De Bari Hermoza said: "We are proposing the signing on Monday of the commitment for the first round of (military) talks this year."

Peru proposes the talks with Ecuador during the second half of the year "because we first have commitments with other countries," De Bari Hermoza said, expressing also his desire that the first round of talks between the top commanders be held this year in Lima.

"The dates have no importance; the essential thing is that they are going to be implemented," Gen. Ortega said at the end of the visit of his Peruvian counterpart, with whom he held talks for two hours at the Ecuadoran Defense Ministry.

Talks between the two military commanders will continue on Monday in Lima, where, according to predictions, the agreements on confidence measures will be signed and the dates for the first round of military talks between the two countries will be set.

Ecuador: Peru's Hermoza Says Talks With Ortega 'Positive'

PY0203021596 Quito Voz de Los Andes in Spanish 2300 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] General Nicolas de Bari Hermoza, head of the Peruvian Armed Forces Joint Command, said that Ecuador and Peru have quickly developed their talks and could soon begin a round of negotiations to definitively conclude delimitation of the border between the two countries. The balance is positive, he said.

Border differences led to bloody fighting between the Armed Forces of the two countries in the Amazon jungle

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

region in January 1995, killing scores of soldiers and leaving more than 100 wounded.

Gen. De Bari Hermoza made these remarks after a meeting with his Ecuadoran counterpart Jorge Ortega, within the framework of a round of talks intended to reduce tension between the two Andean countries.

The two generals met to discuss, among other things, the procedures to be followed by soldiers deployed to the border area to prevent confrontations. In addition to the two top commanders, present at the meeting were three high-ranking Peruvian officers, five Ecuadoran officers, and seven officers representing member countries of the international obverver's mission comprised of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and the United States.

Gen. Jorge Ortega will leave on Sunday for Lima to begin a second meeting between the high-ranking officers. De Bari Hermoza added that the Lima meeting will serve to consolidate the atmosophere of peace the two foreign ministers need to begin territorial negotiations. This visit harbingers assurance that our two Armed Forces will be able to continue seeking a peace agreement amid a climate of stability and tranquillity, he said.

Ecuador: Defense Minister Urges MOMEP To Verify Accords

PY0203024096 Quito Voz de Los Andes in Spanish 2300 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ecuadoran Defense Minister Alfonso Alarcon has invited the Ecuador-Peru Mission of Military Observers [MOMEP] to verify that his country has not violated the demilitarized zone, as reported in Lima.

We keep our heads high and the hope that MOMEP members will visit our area and also the Peruvian area so as to draw the appropriate conclusions and to report to the country and to the world who has fulfilled and who has not fulfilled the peace agreement.

According to reports published in Lima, Ecuador has reportedly violated a stretch of the demilitarized zone controlled by the MOMEP, and has installed, among other things, a heliport, which has been repeatedly denied by Ecuadoran military and diplomatic officials.

Referring to these reports, Alarcon said that surely these are strategies of some Lima officials who seek to distort or to disturb this peace process between Ecuador and Peru.

Moreover, General Paco Moncayo, chief of the Ecuadoran Army, has said that no personnel of the Ecuadoran Armed Forces have stepped foot in the demilitarized zone since they left that area.

Peru

Peru: Official To Obtain Ecuadoran List of 'Impasses'

PY0103151696 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 28 Feb 96 p A4

[By special correspondent Rossana Echeandia]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Rio de Janeiro, 27 Feb — Peruvian Deputy Foreign Minister Jorge Voto Bernales, who is accompanying President Alberto Fujimori in his visit to Brazil, will return to Brasilia tomorrow to wait to be summoned by the guarantor countries to obtain the list of the subsistent impasses presented by Ecuador.

This information was disclosed by President Fujimori during a conversation with reporters regarding the peace process with Ecuador. [passage omitted]

Peru: Ecuador's Leoro Said Disclosing Impasse 'Secrets'

PY0103152196 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 28 Feb 96 p A4

[Article: "Galo Leoro's Secrets"; from the "Without Confirmation" column]

[FBIS Translated Text] The way Ecuadoran Foreign Minister Galo Leoro continues to make comments, his Peruvian counterpart Francisco Tudela will have to believe less of what he says. If it has to do with keeping secrets, he will have to believe almost nothing.

According to the recent commitment signed by the two foreign ministers in Quito, the content of the "subsistent impasses" delivered by Peru and Ecuador to the guarantor countries of the Rio de Janeiro Protocol will be disclosed after Peru fulfills its commitment to withdraw 390 soldiers from Watch Post 2 and after the MOMEP [Ecuador-Peru Military Observers Mission] verifies the withdrawal.

Galo Leoro did not wait for the MOMEP to disclose the list, nor did he respect Tudela's mission in Brazil. Leoro went ahead and said that one of the Ecuadoran "impasses" is that the Rio de Janeiro Protocol cannot be implemented, and it is not known whether Peru will accept this point as the basic issue of discussion.

Could it be that the sealed Ecuadoran envelope in the hands of the guarantor countries simply contains the deadlock Ecuador would want to stagnate the diplomatic negotiations?

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Peru: Jurists, Opposition Criticize Receipt of 'Impasses'

PY0303205396 Lima LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 29 Feb 96 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] While jurists and politicians of the opposition were saying that acceptance of "prevailing impasses" implied a weakness in Peruvian foreign policy, which Ecuador now intends to use to "negotiate" the unfeasibility of the Rio de Janeiro Protocol, government representatives argued that it was "an inevitable agreement" for the sake of peace.

Disagreements concerning the decision to reduce the number of Peruvian soldiers from Watch Post 2 (PV2) was also noted. Some termed it a blunder and ingenuousness, while others said it was a concession that is usually employed in certain cases to proceed with talks.

But the point on which there was consensus was that Peru must reaffirm to Ecuador the fact that the Rio de Janeiro Protocol and the Brazilian arbitrator Braz Dias de Aguiar's ruling are fully in effect.

Enrique Bernales Ballesteros, constitution expert and former member of the Foreign Ministry Consultative Committee, said that from the very beginning he expressed his concern over the so-called Quito Agreement signed by the Ecuadoran and Peruvian foreign ministers.

He believes that Peru has exaggerated in the "unnecessary display of goodwill" toward a Foreign Ministry which, like that of Ecuador, is not "as honest as it would seen."

Bernales said: "There is nothing clear and there has been encircling maneuvers in which our Foreign Ministry ingenuously fell."

He added that it is no secret that Ecuador defends the theory that the Rio de Janeiro Protocol cannot be implemented, and that it will become the axis of its list of "prevailing impasses."

In a frankly critical tone, Bernales said that "in exchange of knowing what we already knew," the Peruvian Government has accepted the following:

1. To withdraw 390 men from PV2, which is not included in the demilitarized zone;

2. To allow supervision by MOMEP [Ecuador-Peru Mission of Military Observers] in a territory which is absolutely under Peruvian sovereignty, with which Ecuador has achieved a diplomatic victory by excess of complacency of Peruvian foreign policy;

Bernales said: I also warned (it was not published), as soon as I learned about the agreement between Peru and Ecuador, that I was certain that the interpretation of the meeting of the two foreign ministers was going to be an agreement that will force our country to sit and discuss and negotiate with them theories that cannot be implemented.

"I was right, and this was confirmed by Foreign Minister Leoro and President Duran-Ballen," he said.

He criticized the fact that at the Quito meeting it was agreed to talk based on an agenda made up of the list of demarcation impasses between Peru and Ecuador.

In light of this delicate situation, Bernales urged the government to adopt a clear and firm position. "I must say that it is not acceptable for Ecuador to include in the list of impasses the fact that the protocol cannot be implemented. The Itamaraty [Brazilian Foreign Ministry] Declaration was harmful for Peru because Peru accepted the existence of "prevailing impasses" and now we have to pay for it," he said.

According to jurist Alberto Ruiz Eldredge, also a former member of the Foreign Ministry Consultative Committee, this Ecuadoran insistence on considering the unfeasibility of the protocol must be taken as a warning to be prepared in the legal, military, and diplomatic fields.

He also believes that Peru was weak to accept the so-called "prevailing impasses."

Concerning the withdrawal of troops from PV2, he said that it was a concession that is usually employed in exchange for other concessions.

Ruiz Eldredge said that Peru has the legal arguments to demand compliance with the treaty and the Dias de Aguiar arbitration.

As an example he mentioned the book published recently by the Foreign Ministry on the border problem between Peru and Ecuador, especially the paragraph by the Rio de Janeiro Inter-American Juridical Committee.

The committee, he said, states that if Peru accepts the Ecuadoran position it would create a chaos in the international concert on questioning the essential principle of respect for treaties and arbitrations.

Another argument is Stopel's theory, the so-called self-act doctrine, which states that a country that for long period of time accepts a manner of solving a problem with another country, cannot argue that it is unfeasible.

Moreover, he added, there is the note the guarantor countries signed on 7 December 1969 and sent to the two countries stating that the treaty is valid.

"Peru must keep a firm position in accordance with the treaty and the Dias de Aguiar arbitration and the support

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

of the guarantor countries, seeking the fulfillment of Article 5 of the treaty which states that what needs to be demarcated must be done according to the Dias de Aguiar ruling."

Congressman Carlos Ferrero, also of the ruling party, said that he is certain that negotiations between Peru and Ecuador must take place face-to-face to show that the treaty is fully implementable and that difficulties are resolved in accordance with the Dias de Aguiar arbitration ruling.

"If there is need for the work of a technical expert to interpret the ruling, we will have one," he said.

Rejecting criticism by the opposition, Ferrero said that acceptance of the "prevailing impasses" in the Itamaraty Declaration was inevitable because behind this is the objective of attaining peace.

He said that the submission of impasses by Ecuador is a fact that will serve as written support for the development of negotiations.

Ferrero asked not to forget that this is an electoral year for Ecuador, which conditions the actions of the government of President Duran-Ballen, and urged the people to prepare for a long period of negotiations.

On the incursion of Ecuadoran troops in the demilitarized zone, he said that with the support of MOMEP the two countries are trying hard so that any irregularity be treated seriously and that the agreement on the matter must be fulfilled.

Ferrero also justified the withdrawal of troops from PV2, saying that it was a reasonable measure in line with the negotiations.

The group of opposition PPC [see Progressive Christian Party] congressmen, expressed categorical disagreement with Ferrero, and through a motion in Congress, they asked that the defense and foreign ministers be summoned to report on the latest events concerning the demarcation problem with Ecuador.

Flores-Araoz said that two ministers must explain the latest events which, according to him, imply the violation of the Itamaraty Declaration by Ecuador.

Peru: Daily Assesses Ecuador-Peru Border Military Meeting

PY0103193896 Lima LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 14 Feb 96 p 18

[Editorial: "The Progress of Detente"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The members of the Ecuadoran and Peruvian Armed Forces high command have just held a solemn and cordial meeting on the border. This meeting was also attended by the military chiefs of the four guarantor countries of the Rio de Janeiro Protocol.

The site selected for this meeting was the No. 21 border marker at the confluence of the Yaupi and Santiago Rivers. The ceremony consisted in hoisting the respective flags to the tune of the two national anthems and the delivery of speeches by Generals Nicolas Hermoza and Jorge Ortega, chiefs of the Peruvian and Ecuadoran joint command.

Brazilian General Francisco de Albuquerque delivered a speech on behalf of the guarantor countries. He stated with optimism that "Peru and Ecuador have never been so closed to achieving peace." He added that ceremonies similar to the one that had just taken place have helped to promote an atmosphere of confidence between the two countries.

Although few would dare to admit it, and we will not be the first to do so, one wonders once the euphoria is over, how can these meetings serve the peace process in which the two countries are engaged.

At this time it is suitable to discuss one positive aspect of the meeting, perhaps the most favorable part of the meeting: the tacit acknowledgment made by the Ecuadoran troops and its high command on the prevalence of the Rio de Janeiro Protocol. In fact, because the meeting was held on both sides of border marker 21, this means that the border demarcated by this marker has been accepted.

This which is so obvious for Peruvians does not seem to be the case for Ecuadorans. Or at least it is just beginning to be acknowledged and accepted as a categorical truth after more than 30 years of proclaiming the "nullity and nonexistence" of this protocol. Ecuador today acknowledged that this is an erroneous position which has led them to the indefatigable demagoguery of Jose Maria Velasco Ibarra.

The end of Ecuador's defiance of a treaty, which for Peruvians has been valid and fully in force for 50 years, is an indispensable step for any ulterior debate of the "subsistent impasses" as is established in the Itamaraty Declaration and on which Ecuador will issue its official position only during the next foreign ministers' meeting.

Aside from the aforementioned acknowledgment, there was little progress worthy of mention. For example, it does not seem that the Ecuadoran proposal to establish a bilateral mechanism that will allow the mutual information on the purchase of weapons was discussed.

This issue was brought up as a result of the controversy surrounding the acquisition by Ecuador of four Israeli-made Kfir hunter jets which have already been delivered

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

to the Ecuadoran Air Force despite the Peruvian diplomatic protest.

Many believe that this proposal is inappropriate because it is currently virtually impossible to keep secret the acquisition of guns in view of the fact that the arms market is closely watched by several First World specialized institutes which publish magazines and bulletins detailing these transactions.

What would have been interesting to discuss is a subject that is being handled at the diplomatic level and it deals with an information provided by Ecuador about the mined fields on the common border which continue to cause mutilations and destruction. Both countries are signatories of the Geneva Conventions and other international treaties that prohibit inhuman war practices. Therefore, Ecuador must comply with these treaties and completely clean the border area of mines.

There was, however, one other point of agreement: The two countries agree on postponing the permanence of the MOMEP [Ecuador-Peru Military Observers Mission] in the demilitarized zone for at least until the peace process has progressed to such a level so as to make unnecessary its presence. The spokesman of the guarantor countries said that the subject is being studied and that an answer would be issued soon.

This meeting must be viewed within the framework of the meetings started by the foreign ministers, President Fujimori's trip to Quito and President Sixto Duran-Ballen's trip to Peru in March within the framework of the Andean Group presidential summit.

President Duran-Ballen's upcoming visit is a key factor in a long peace process that will advance step by step according to the political willingness of the two governments and the agreements that are achieved. Both military chiefs were very clear on this: The military is subject to the development of the diplomatic negotiations and to what is achieved by the two governments regarding detente.

Moreover, as it could not be otherwise, the chairman of the Armed Forces joint command insisted on the need to conclude the process of placing the border markers along the common border. The day this is achieved everything will be truly possible between our two countries for no one has questioned that Ecuador is entitled to have free access to the Amazon as it is established in the Rio de Janeiro Protocol through navigable rivers and customs facilities made available by Peru.

This military meeting at the border is part of the current detente process. Although the process might experience some setbacks right now there are citizen groups on both sides of the border interested on achieving a peaceful solution to a problem that has lasted for far too long.

Peru: Analyst Views Fujimori's International Image

PY0103192996 Lima LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 28 Feb 96 p 6

[Article by Mirko Lauer entitled: "In Brazil Not Everybody is Like Lucar"; Nicolas Lucar is a U.S. television reporter who supports Fujimori]

[FBIS Translated Text] By refusing to receive President Alberto Fujimori, the Brazilian Congress and the judicial branch did not deny him his condition of president but questioned his democratic legitimacy. Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who did receive Fujimori and signed three agreements with him, has in his background more than one declaration against the dangers of Fujimorism in his own country.

This is not the first time Fujimori is experiencing something like this. On several occasions Fujimori had to be seated next to Fidel Castro, he had to face toasts for democracy in international meetings, and he could not attend some meetings because Mario Vargas Llosa was the guest of honor.

Fujimori does not always have to travel to be treated with scorn. George Bush practically brushed him off in the antidrug meeting in San Antonio in 1992. Carlos Andres Perez accused him of making Peruvians poorer for economic purposes in 1993. [Former Ecuadoran President] Rodrigo Borja accused him of being a liar within the context of the 1995 military conflict in the Cepena River region.

Not only Fujimori's image gets bit up, the Peruvian "image" also gets bit up in many places. Bill Clinton says we are still not clean from drug trafficking. Moody's classify us as a country with great risk for investors.

The truth is that in those cases Fujimori does not admit the existence of a serious offense and he is not even moved by it. The only perceptible reaction is that he has stopped trying to sell his coup style "real democracy" in international meetings and has concentrated his effort in projecting an image of success to businessmen.

It is obvious that Fujimori feels he is quite legitimate. He does not renege on the 1992 coup, his electoral achievements seem to him irreproachable and his popularity percentages sufficient. But his reputation as a person who does not fulfill his oath, and let's not talk about his promises, has followed him beyond his reelection, and this will perhaps be his mark in history.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

Perhaps the greatest problems Fujimori has at the international level is his antagonism for democratic parties as institutions. But this is precisely what makes him a likable man in meetings of multinational companies. This is why he always wanted to turn the Peruvian Foreign Ministry into an office of commercial public relations.

In addition to the smiles Fujimori's behavior may cause to opposition leaders, it is important because it shows a basic diplomatic weakness. It is the same weakness which led the guarantor countries of the Rio de Janeiro Protocol to be more sympathetic for Ecuador. Through Fujimori Peru has many enemies in many places.

It must be admitted that things such as manners or protocol do not bother Fujimori. He even bought, with such an urgency that prevented any bidding, a luxurious airplane to visit presidents of republics and companies that do welcome him. He could paint it in orange and write on each side his presidential campaign slogan: "Honesty, Technology, and Work."

Peru: Editorial Views Current Economic Policy, Situation

PY0303210896 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 14 Feb 96 p A30

[Editorial: "The Government Does Not Answer"]

[FBIS Translated Text] EXPRESO has several times unsuccessfully tried to interview the economy minister and the Central Reserve Bank president to discuss aspects of the economy, given the fact that an unskilled or ill—designed management has led it to a recession greater than expected. The government does not show its face on the economic issue because, everything indicates, it does not know what to do.

On the one hand, it has restrained the economy with policies intended to increase interest rates which have only succeeded in worsening the financial situation of the companies and in discouraging investment, but not a retraction of consumption credit. In other words, that policy has not served to reduce trade deficit but to restrain investment, while what we need is just to increase investment, which is the only way to keep growing and to keep the current account deficit sustainable.

The Economy Ministry and the Central Reserve Bank were scared by the amount of the deficit in current account, without realizing that remittances made by Peruvians and cocaine exports are not being registered, and without realizing that an important part of that deficit is investment.

Now we run the risk of restraining investment without even achieving the objective of reducing the foreign deficit. Why? Because far from facing the main problems, except for a certain adjustment in public investment, it was decided for self-defeating remedies such as increasing the interest rates, or recently, forbidding imports of used cars.

What are the main problems? Some extra costs greater than those of our neighbors and an exchange rate lag also greater than that of all countries of South America, including Argentina. Thus, regardless of how much we reduce consumption (or the added demand), we will continue importing more because imported products will increasingly be cheaper as compared to national products.

The situation might also be aggravated because a drop in consumption will lead to a lesser demand for dollars and for this reason to a greater appraisal of the sol, with which our production's competitiveness will be even less.

How can we get out of this vicious circle? That is the question we want to ask our economic and monetary authorities to see if they do have an answer.

We believe that in a free economy where the dollar floats, we should not worry so much about the foreign deficit if we are not generating fiscal deficit (even better if we have a surplus) and if there is investment in significant amounts, because that foreign deficit will be expressing that investment and not a growing substitution of national by imported products.

But if we insist on not seeing the main problems and on maintaining a passive policy concerning investment in sectors such as agro-exports or manufactured clothing, the only thing we are going to achieve is changing the composition of the foreign deficit: It will no longer reflect a purchase of capital goods for investment, but a growing preference for consumption of imported products, which would be increasingly cheaper than national products. There and then should we begin to worry.

Venezuela

Venezuela: Executive Delays Delegation's Trip to U.S.

PA0103224496 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 1545 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Finance Minister Luis Raul Matos Azocar announced that the executive has delayed, for a few days, the trip to Washington by the Venezuelan mission tasked with conducting negotiations with the IMF. Reporter Zulay Rosas says that for now, Venezuela will wait for the political situation to be resolved in the U.S. Congress.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

[Rosas] Matos Azocar said that the talks with the IMF are in their definitive phase, and that many fiscal laws awaiting congressional approval are involved in the Agenda Venezuela.

[Begin Matos Azocar recording] We have a few days of waiting period. I do not want to predict anything, but probably, everything will be resolved in a very short time. Then, we will know what the definitive stance of the political blocs will be regarding the general income tax. [end recording]

[Rosas] Meanwhile, Edgard Paredes Pizzani, minister of coordination and planning, explained that when the president summoned special sessions in Congress, the approval of the pending legal instruments designed to reduce the fiscal deficit — [words indistinct] the multilateral organization — was expected in late February or early March, at the latest.

[Begin Edgar Paredes recording] Our option is to run the risk, in other words, to leave without the law and try to reach a memorandum of understanding without the law at hand and with a very poor precedent for Venezuela. This would be negative for both Venezuela and the IMF, because the 1989 package was based on a value-added tax, which was never passed by Congress. [end recording]

[Rosas] Paredes also said that he had warned about this situation a long time ago: Congress refuses to approve the laws because there is no agreement with the IMF, and the IMF, in turn, refuses to approve the Agenda Venezuela, because the laws have not been approved. Paredes made it quite clear that the Agenda Venezuela is not only a government commitment, but also a commitment by all of the country's sectors in general. He added that the Legislative Branch has its quota of responsibility, which is to enact all of the fiscal laws involved in this process.

Venezuela: Report on Reactions to Suspension of IMF Talks

PA0103231796 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1357 GMT 1 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Caracas, 1 Mar (EFE) — The Venezuelan Government's decision to temporarily suspend its negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which many view as the only means of saving the national economy, surprised economic sectors and generated uncertainty in the markets.

The government on 29 February announced the suspension of a trip by a negotiations mission to Washington to pursue the talks that Venezuela initiated with the IMF last October to obtain urgent financial aid amounting to as much as $7.5 billion.

Government spokesmen explained that the trip was suspended because Congress has not yet approved a series of tax laws which the government promised the IMF it would adopt.

The announcement was interpreted by economic sectors as a show of the government's unwillingness to reach an agreement with the IMF, an organization which current President Rafael Caldera had compared to Satan over the past few years, especially in 1993 during the electoral campaign that took him to power.

Aurelio Concheso, vice president of Fedecamaras [Venezuelan Federation of Associations and Chambers of Commerce and Industry], the country's leading management organization, today regretted the government's decision and pointed out that the trip's suspension "is another step on the government's path of negative marches and countermarches."

Concheso, pointing out that the negotiations with the IMF began in October, added that "Mexico resolved the tequila effect crisis in six weeks, Argentina obtained the IMF's support in four weeks, and Russia in four months, but the five months that Venezuela has been negotiating are still not enough."

As a result of the official announcement, the prices of Venezuelan foreign debt bonds dropped on the New York market, Caracas Stock Market securities decreased, and the price of the dollar on the parallel market rose to 478 bolivares, in comparison to 290 bolivares on the controlled official market.

According to analysts, the suspension of the trip was really prompted by the government faction's delicate position in Congress after the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS), one of the parties that led Caldera to power, announced that it will be joining the opposition parties.

The imminent break between the MAS and the ruling party gives the opposition parties an ample congressional majority, and does not guarantee for Caldera the approval of laws he requires to continue negotiating with the IMF.

Planning Minister Edgar Paredes indirectly blamed Congress for the suspension of the mission's trip, and hinted that negotiations with the IMF are paralyzed and trapped in a vicious circle.

"Congress has refused to approve certain tax laws because we have not yet reached an agreement with the IMF, and the IMF is refusing to sign the agreement

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

if we do not have the House and Senate's approval of those laws," Paredes said.

The agreement Venezuela is seeking with the IMF is considered by economic sectors as the only means of resolving the serious crisis the country is experiencing, trapped as it is by runaway inflation and a delicate social, political, moral, and institutional situation.

According to the analysts, the agreement would provide the country with fresh money to balance its fiscal accounts, which are distorted by a burdensome deficit, and to undertake plans to curb escalating inflation, which in January was 8.1 percent and over the past 12 months amounted to 64.2 percent.

An agreement with the IMF would also facilitate lifting the rigid exchange controls that have been in place since June 1994, which are viewed as factors that hinder and paralyze economic activity and hinder the trade openness the government is attempting to promote.

Analysts are also saying that the IMF's support will guarantee an adequate level of international reserves for important changes in the national economy, and to pay the heavy foreign debts that the nation must honor in 1996.

According to the government's announcement this week, 35 percent of the 1996 national budget, which amounts to 4.9 trillion bolivares (approximately $16.8 billion), will be earmarked for the payment of interest on the foreign debt, which currently amounts to $30 billion.

Venezuela: Finance Minister Favors Signing IMF Pact

PA0203220296 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0300 GMT 2 Mar 96

[Report by Zayda Pereira]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the opinion of Finance Minister Luis Raul Matos Azocar, Venezuela would benefit from signing an agreement with the IMF. This signing will be delayed a few days while the situation is cleared in Congress.

The finance minister said that specific revenue reports must be presented to the IMF, and much of this depends on what Congress decides regarding sales taxes and taxes on financial transactions. This decision could require a new proposal and shorter deadlines.

If Congress' answer were to be negative, the Venezuelan Government would have to recheck estimates so that the budget deficit does not go more than 2.2 percent above the GNP, as has been agreed with the IMF, and then a definite proposal would have to be presented to the IMF.

[Begin Matos Azocar recording] The government will invoke a spirit of cooperation and suggest that the analysis of laws that were not approved during the special sessions be reopened. [end recording]

Regarding the lifting of exchange controls, Matos Azocar said that this depends on the situation of international reserves and the fiscal deficit and this will determine if the controls will be lifted during the first quarter of the year or be postponed.

Matos Azocar said that gasoline prices will be discussed at the negotiations table and this is why the president of Venezuelan Petroleum Inc., Luis Giusti , will participate in those negotiations. He has several alternatives that he wants to present.

This report may contain copyrighted material. Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 352
MERRIFIELD, VA.

This is a U.S. Government publication produced by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). Its contents in no way represent the policies, views, or attitudes of the U.S. Government.

FBIS collects, translates, disseminates, and analyzes foreign open-source information on behalf of the U.S. Government. Its publications may contain copyrighted material. ***Copying and dissemination is prohibited without permission of the copyright owners.***

— Bracketed indicators before the first sentence of each item describe the way in which the material was processed by FBIS.

— Headlines and all bracketed explanatory notes are supplied by FBIS.

— Personal and place names are rendered in accordance with the decisions of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names as adapted by FBIS. Unverified names in radio and television material appear in parentheses and are spelled phonetically; words and phrases in parentheses preceded by a question mark are unclear in the original and deduced from context.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

U.S. Government Customers

For a list of FBIS products, to subscribe to an FBIS publication, or to indicate a change of address contact:

FBIS
P.O. Box 2604
Washington, DC 20013-2604
Telephone: (202) 338-6735
FAX: (703) 733-6042

Non-Government Customers

Subscriptions are available from the National Technical Information Service:

NTIS
5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, VA 22161
Telephone: (703) 487-4630
FAX: (703) 321-8547

New subscribers should expect a 30-day delay in receipt of the first issue.